

VICISTI, GALILÆE ?
OR
RELIGION IN ENGLAND

EDWARD B. POWLEY



Author's presentation to his daughter,
I think, with a textual correction
Done

For Ins.

1947

Please remember this was
written 18 years ago.
Some modifications might
be necessary.

author

VICISTI, GALILÆE ?

OR

RELIGION IN ENGLAND : A SURVEY
AND A FORECAST

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

*For the Contents of this Series see the end of
the Book*

VICISTI, GALILÆE?

OR

RELIGION IN ENGLAND: A SURVEY AND A FORECAST

BY

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"Indifference and hypocrisy between them keep orthodoxy alive. . . . Orthodoxy cannot be purified unless by juggling with words. . . . Orthodoxy is inextricably entangled with ritual observance; and ceremonial religion is of the ancient world, not the modern."

"But . . . ceremonial religion is pregnant with sublime symbolism and its discipline is most salutary. Ceremony is the casket of religion."

"More often its coffin."

CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO., BK. II, CH. XV.,
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

" . . . vision begins when thought ceases, *to our consciousness*,
to proceed from ourselves."

CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM, P. 14. W. R. INGE.

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

MY FATHER

INTRODUCTORY

Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus, who died shortly after 450, is answerable for the first record of the silly legend that the emperor Julian, whom, for his repudiation of the Christian religion the Christians ventured, as soon as possible, to call the Apostate, died, after battle with the Persians, in 363, confessing, with the words *νενίκηκας Γαλιλαίη*¹ usually translated *Vicisti Galilæe* the victory of the faith he had abjured. The Latin phrase, used as a question (and written with the now permissible marks of punctuation) will supply a title to this book.

VICISTI, GALILÆE? Has the Galilean conquered, not in the world at large but in "Christian England" only? If not, can Christianity here hope at length for triumph? With such a subject, the temptation to plunge *in medias res* is strong. The temptation must be avoided. The inquiry is best conducted in three simple stages: "The Past", "The Present", "The Future".

¹ Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἱστορίας—Γ' Κ'

VICISTI, GALILÆE ?
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CHAPTER I
THE PAST

I

It is nearly 2,000 years since Jesus, the son of a Jewish carpenter, lived and died. A disciple of John Baptist, he remained unmarried, preached that the "kingdom of God" (that is to say, the kingdom of the god of the Jews) was at hand, and gathered disciples to spread the message. An uncompromising personality and the exercise of unusual powers of healing widely advertized him. He made much use of parables to insure that only those fitted to hear his call should be attracted to him. But those that had ears to hear were given to know a 'mystery'; the kingdom would be brought to pass almost immediately by an act of intervention

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on the part of God; it would descend as it were in lightning from the Palestinian noonday, or suddenly from the great white stars. That kingdom, whatever allowance be made for the imagery in which Jesus foretold it, involved the supercession of the mundane order and the imposition of a theocratic utopia—not, be it noted, for the good of all but for the benefit of a few. Jesus popularized a long-current notion by speaking habitually of his God as father, talk which tended to make God ‘him’—a gigantic anthropomorphism like the figure at the back of Browning’s *Saul*. He set forth an anarchic simplicity of behaviour as the right attitude for those who, knowing their election sure, awaited the cataclysm. Pressed to its logical conclusion, his teaching implied the establishment of a communistic group thriftlessly living upon its capital and practising non-resistance and allied ‘virtues’. The kingdom tarried. In due time he initiated his band into the supreme secret that he himself claimed to be the ‘messiah’; and, at much the same point, he began to identify himself with the ‘suffering servant’, portrayed in the *deutero-Isaiah*. He wistfully accepted the way of death as the condition of vindication. He grew more bold; he took care to fulfil

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by his conduct the minutiae of the prophecies concerning the messiah; he challenged official Jerusalem. A disciple betrayed his pretension. The waiting authorities rejoiced. As the hour of inescapable arrest drew on, in solemn covenant, over broken bread and out-poured wine, he sacramentally bound his followers to him. He believed that he would rise from the dead and his teaching receive proof. He was crucified—a railing inscription in three languages, “This is the King of the Jews”, written over him. The end came quickly. As he took up beneath the Syrian sky the words of the 22nd Psalm “*Eli, Eli lama sabacthani*”, the crowd jeered; and no doubt the Jewish priesthood reflected that one more visionary had paid the proper price of dreams. In a new grave a few friends laid him. Ere light upon the third day a woman looked for the body. She did not discover the corpse; but she declared confidently that a presence had greeted her in the garden of burial—calling her by name “Mary”. Out of her woman’s love she made the expected resurrection. Others professed like vision. Yet other disciples accepted that which they were told. All concerned amplified their experience, in their conversation recreating their master,

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clothing, yet not clothing, him with habiliments of flesh. Mary's illusion or hallucination, the illusion or hallucination of others, the growth of credence in the reported apparitions, together constitute an historic fact. That historic fact is the *terminus a quo* of Christianity.

In zealot Judæa it was easy to shape a working faith. A miracle (for such to those under illusion or hallucination or in a state of belief in apparitions their strange experience seemed) had proved that a miracle, the apocalyptic coming of the kingdom, would surely yet happen. When Time took revenge upon exaltation, when imagery faded and questionings arose, when disciples, who were obviously unable to demonstrate to the world at large the return of their master, perforce allocated him to the heavens, ascended, glorified, equal with God, belief in the restoration of the kingdom unto Israel did not fail. Not theirs, the disciples argued, to know "the times or the seasons" which the "Father" had "in his own power", but rather to wait in "prayer and supplication" an unfolding plan. Re-orientation came in an upper room in Jerusalem. Convinced, in a new access of enthusiasm—another miracle for their ready credence—that the spirit of the messiah had not left them

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comfortless on earth, they confronted the Jerusalem populace and began preaching. God, Peter declared, had made "that same Jesus whom" they, the Jews, had "crucified, both Lord and Christ". To those that would recognize their call the way of escape amid an "untoward generation" still stood open. The apostles, as they are best henceforth called, baptized such as "gladly received" the message.

"And all that believed were together and had all things common; And sold their possession and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

It is not surprising that Peter and John soon tasted prison and the lash, that the fervent Stephen attained martyrdom, or that James was beheaded. A step of great importance was taken when Peter decided that not the special interest of the Jew in the messianic kingdom should be allowed to stay the proclamation of the gospel to Gentile listeners. Barnabas and Saul (Paul), a recently converted persecutor, with others, preached zealously. The cult penetrated the wider Roman world; it percolated to Rome itself.

It is fatally easy to idealize the process

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by which Christianity spread, to imagine self-sufficient groups observing the anarchic simplicity of life upon which Jesus had always insisted as the proper preparation for the kingdom, cherishing the sayings and parables and deeds of their Christ, repeating the prayer of the kingdom, keeping specially sacred the first day of the week, and, upon that day, in a specific central ceremony, during their *agapai*, their common feasts, in broken bread and outpoured wine, both binding themselves in brotherhood and peril and commemorating the supreme sacrifice towards the consummation that could not be long delayed. The picture is only in part warranted. Communism, after the initial Jerusalem days, nowhere obtained. The last resting-places of those who gathered in the catacombs of Rome reveal a respect for differences of rank. The *Epistle of James the Less* is barbed against the snobbery of the parent church of Jerusalem itself. But, the relinquishment of pure communism apart, there are drastic qualifications to record. Jesus had not transcended the popular misconceptions of his generation. He could, unless his followers constantly misrepresented him, believe in demoniacal possession; he could curse a harmless fig-tree; he certainly believed in devils

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and angels, in his own resurrection and the miraculous advent of his reign. The apostles held that he had broken the bands of death, ascended the heavens and, in answer to prayer, sent down the 'Comforter,' witnessed in rushing wind and "cloven tongues like as of fire". In a world in which crass superstition, Epicureanism, Stoicism, Neo-platonism, Persian, and (perhaps) Buddhist ideas all commingled, the early Christians dwelt. Anti-natural wonders and inconsequent happenings mark those men's records of their own doings ; they who were filled with the spirit were possessed of a talisman against evil and poison ; the doom of Sapphira is the casting of the spell of that same Holy Ghost which Paul pits against the sorcerer Elymas. And it could not be otherwise than that they who built up oral gospels, penned what they heard or redacted the work of others should embellish the life of Jesus with unnecessary amplifications. Pallas Athene, fully armed, men said, sprang from the head of Zeus ; the birth of Gautama, the Buddha, was, by some, deemed miraculous ; this Christ, after Mark had written of him, was also declared virgin-born (at what pains is Matthew to bring his male genealogy to the very conclusion that disproves his thesis !) ; he was said

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to have been honoured by shepherds to whom angels announced him, and adored by magi following an errant star. Herod was made a murderer of innocents for his sake ; as a babe he was taken into Egypt; as a child disputed in the temple . . . and so on. In short, no chance of emphasizing the miraculous was lost by the early chroniclers of Jesus. Last, the writer of *St John*, steeped in Alexandrine philosophy, made Christ and the *logos* one. From writings, one may turn to scrutinize the central rite of the *αγαπή*. Just as, in all probability, the custom of baptism had never been quite non-magically understood—Paul cited (52-56) the custom of baptism for and on behalf of the dead with no apparent disapproval—so the more frequent supper observance bore the marks of a crude mystery. Paul contrasted the “Lord’s table” and the “table of devils,” and held that the consumption of the bread and wine put upon certain unworthy Corinthians a retrospective share in the death of their Christ and that disease and even death were the retributory consequences of false eating and drinking. In short, in spite of its merits, Christianity was a cult among cults, a plant rooted in the soil of Judaism and nourished and fed by the atmosphere of the pagan world.

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At the first deaths among the Christians of the apostolic age, at the passing away of a whole generation—the kingdom being unfulfilled—the churches apparently entered upon a crisis. Not till Paul plainly taught that, as Jesus had risen from the dead, so their dead had not “perished”; that, in any case, “flesh and blood” would not “inherit the kingdom”; that, at the “last trump”, the dead would rise “incorruptible” and join with the living to stand “changed” before the judgment seat of their God, did the questionings abate. Paul’s interpretation gave new confidence. The everyday world remained unreal. Joy, the mark of the waiting Christian, increased.

After the days of Paul, the faith entered upon its testing. The extent of official persecution, which could be avoided by throwing a handful of incense on the altar of a Roman god, has been exaggerated. It developed chiefly through Christian talk of a messiah and a messianic kingdom which, reported to Roman ears, stood for a denial of the divine honours due to deceased emperors, or it raised the bogey of secret societies and of that Jewish fanaticism which Rome had good cause to dislike. Less or more, persecution vitalized the early churches.

It preserved a greater simplicity of life than would otherwise have obtained, and it heightened the glamour of the unrealized dream. The exiled writer of *The Apocalypse* was not unique in his vivid imaginings of a kingdom "new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven", a "tabernacle of God . . . with men", which nor death nor night nor sorrow nor defilement could invade but whose counterpart was a lake burning and a "second death". But persecution in the long run defeated itself; it awakened the minds of those who governed, if not to a certain intrinsic moral worth in lives lived Christianly against a background of rotting polytheism and too eclectic Stoicism, at least to the futility of the attempt to repress this cult of common folk and slaves. Covert toleration passed into avowed allowance. Constantine blessed where his predecessors had condemned. Pleased that Constantine placed the Christian monogram upon the shields of his legionaries, the Christian fathers ought not, according to the pacifist tenets of their leader, to have been; gifts of land, the project for rearing the church of "Holy Wisdom" in the new capital should have caused the scarred leaders serious reflection if not alarm. But the novelty wore quickly off;

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for, under imperial protection, the churches organized, the civil areas called 'dioceses' serving the purposes of suggestion and model. In 325, the more willingly because one, Arius, had arisen in their midst, to question the divinity of Jesus, many of the fathers met in the first general council in which the Christian leaders had ever gathered, at Nicæa, inland on the Asian side of the sea of Marmara, and placed on record the belief of the majority. There were at the time many professions of the faith in existence, characterized, as far as we can tell, much more by their agreement than divergence. The so-called Apostles' creed was, in main outline, in being. The pronouncement of Nicæa took the shape of a creed based upon the professions of Eusebius of Cæsaræa. Later, the Nicene creed was greatly expanded by Cyril of Jerusalem. It was accepted by a general council in Constantinople in 381. Added to again, to the extent of a few phrases not here important, it was adopted by a council in Chalcedon in 451. The importance of the Constantinopolitan creed¹ to a later age cannot be over-estimated; for it gives a clear notion of

¹ The Nicene creed of the Anglican prayer book translates the Chalcedonian version of the Constantinopolitan creed. For texts of early creeds, see *Ency. Brit.* article "Creeds".

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the state of evolution reached in the mid-fourth century by the faith. The Constantinopolitan creed is cast in a trinitarian mould. It confesses "one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible"; it sets forth "Jesus Christ" as the "Son of God begotten of His Father before all worlds", but born through the Holy Ghost to a human virgin; it recites his crucifixion, his burial, his resurrection and ascension. It proclaims that "He shall come again to judge the quick and the dead", and that his "kingdom shall have no end". Belief in the Holy Ghost "Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father" the creed avers. The "Catholic and Apostolic Church" with "one baptism for remission of sins" (the doctrine of original sin is implicit in the teaching of the time) receives acknowledgment. The final sentence returns to the doctrine of the kingdom. It approves, in effect, the Pauline view that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God". The words "We look for the resurrection of the dead. And the life of the world to come" are unequivocal.

On the whole, the Constantinopolitan creed states exactly what one would expect in a pronouncement of the time. If it

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makes no reference to prayer or praise or festivals, the reading or interpretation of scripture, to the commemoration of the supper, to seasons or ceremonies, or to any other sacraments, if it says nothing of church government or orders, if it is silent upon the duty of good works while waiting for the kingdom, these all are omissions without difficulty understood. For the requirement of belief in a "Catholic and Apostolic Church" implied acceptance of the rightness of prayer and praise, of anniversaries and seasons, of ceremonies, of instruction in the scripture, of the supper and of the lesser sacraments; it involved acquiescence in a diaconate, a priesthood, an episcopal order, and the admission of a need of good works before the eyes of men. What most strikes, or at least ought to strike, the student of the Nicene creed is the emphasis which it lays upon the *parousia*. Take that notion of the coming of the kingdom with the concomitant ideas of "the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come" away from the creed and it falls hopelessly to pieces.

The course of imperial history from the time of Constantine onwards profoundly affected the Christian churches. Only the church at Rome concerns the English story. Constantine could decree a new

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capital; he could not destroy the fascination which the name Roma exercised over the minds of men. Mundane considerations apart, every Christian believed that, in Rome, Peter and Paul had witnessed unto death. The ecclesia of the old city, alone among the churches of the west, resembled Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria in apostolic foundation. The remains of the crucified Peter lay, rumour reported, in the basilica; and, if that were so, it is *just* credible that they now repose behind the golden cataract of the *confessio* beneath Michael Angelo's dome. The shepherds of other flocks appealed, from time to time, to the Roman pastor. Lands bequeathed created a *patrimonium Petri*. Bishop Leo (440-461) won high prestige by pleading, not without success, with Attila the Hun, and then with Genseric the Vandal. Leo definitely considered himself more than *primus inter pares* among the bishops of the Christian faith. Gregory (590-604) carried the notion further. Diplomatic on occasion, uncompromising at need, he "the real father of the Medieval Papacy" was likened by his contemporaries to God's consul in the earth. He organized his clergy and made monasticism his weapon against paganism.

Some observers find in post-Nicene-

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Constantinopolitan Christianity evidence of great deterioration. The "one baptism for remission of sins" set forth in the Constantinopolitan creed was, well before 500, administered to children. Upon a timely remembrance of Paul's attitude towards baptism for the dead, it does not appear strange that the sprinkling of blessed water should be held efficacious to free an infant, after exorcism, from the curse of original sin and seal it as an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. The phrase concerning the "Catholic and Apostolic Church" recited in Rome in Gregory's bishopric no doubt carried a connotation differing from that which it bore two hundred and fifty years earlier. New prayers had enriched a growing liturgy; the *Te Deum*—almost a metrical creed—could be heard far beyond Milan, its traditional birth-place; ¹ chants in new modes had become popular. More numerous feasts and seasons could be counted in the calendar—in especial a growing hagiology bound the world of the living and the dead, and gave the tenet of the communion of saints a more vivid and yet dangerous

¹ The *Quicumque vult*—called popularly the creed of St Athanasius—took shape by the fifth or sixth century. In it the doctrine of the great day, precursor of "life everlasting" and "everlasting fire", stands definitely as the credal climax.

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meaning ; for they who had won beatitude were supposed to possess intercessory powers. Chiefest among them stood *beata virgo Maria*, who, the church said, had been at her death 'assumed' miraculously into heaven. She was held to possess means to move on behalf of the suppliant the interest of her now triumphant son. To the relics of saints was ascribed potency. The notion of super-erogation had arisen. In the interim of the two and a half centuries the apologist and exegete had entered the field, exhibiting dogma argued as previously implicit yet not hitherto made clear—the doctrine of purgatory being a case in point. All such elaboration within a system which never excluded the magical and supernatural is entirely intelligible. Possibly, in view of the inherent liability of the *agapē* to abuse, it is not surprising that the lovefeast had, in most churches, suffered a transformation which left existent nothing but its central ceremony. To that core rite the name 'eucharist' was and is best applied. In the mid-sixth century the bread and wine, images of the sacrifice, were, by a vested priest, ritually offered to the Father, the Spirit was held to descend, in answer to prayer, to sanctify the oblation ; which was adored (contrary to earliest tradition),

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eaten and drunken. In Gregory's bishopric, the prayer to the Spirit (an *epiklesis*) began to drop from Latin use. If it be asked whether the notion later called 'transubstantiation' were implicit in the average Gregorian ceremony, one cannot, on the balance of evidence, withhold an affirmative reply; an unlettered Roman adored and then ate his Christ, thereby taking into himself the strength of the worshipped spirit. A well-known authority says "All will admit who study the post-Nicene Church, that the Christian sacraments have stolen the clothes of the pagan mysteries, dethroned and forbidden by the Christian emperors".¹ Such may be the case; but the reader should remember Paul's remonstrance to the Corinthians ascribing abnormal properties to the food of the supper. Ignatius (c. 120) spoke of the food as the "drug of immortality" and sufficient similar detailed evidence exists to prove that, except for the finer spirits, the talismanic view was ever fundamental, acceptable doctrine. The 'sacraments' of confirmation, penance, matrimony² and extreme unction were in usage; in them exactly cognate ideas received expression—a bishop's hand transmitted the Holy

¹ F. C. Conybeare, article "Sacraments" in *Ency. Brit.*

² Matrimony less a sacrament than the rest.

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Ghost, a penance set by a priest cancelled part of a punishment for sin, the words of a priest made male and female on earth indissolubly one, oil blessed by a bishop, placed upon eye, ear, hand and corporal members, had virtue to speed the parting soul. Even when those changes in episcopal rule which resulted from the growth of the claims of the see of Rome are closely canvassed, it is far from easy to decide that the Petrine policy was either unworthily conceived or improperly pursued; while to the furtherance by Rome of monasticism there can surely be no valid objection. The ranking of orders as a full sacrament was not abnormal. If evidence of Christian virtues and good works, of zeal and martyrdom be sought for, the two and a half centuries will supply it abundantly; but in one respect there undeniably was a falling away in Christian conduct after the Council met. In the fourth century, Priscillian perished with his six companions upon heretic pyres. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), author of "*De civitate Dei*", argued the case for persecution. Gregory's antipathy to the Arian Lombards at his threshold was bitter in the extreme. But, with this unwelcome defect allowed for, it is possible to turn the leaf upon the era

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325-600 with the conviction that the churches under the leadership of Rome did not, in general, discredit their foundation or their mission. The *parousia* still remained the expectation and the end of the faith. " . . . a short time and the earth and the heavens will burn and among the blazing elements amid angels and archangels, and thrones and dominions, and principalities and powers, the terrible Judge will appear."¹ The words are Gregory's. Yet as Rome attained to organization and self-consciousness, the more she thought of herself as the kingdom of God already upon earth, the micro-cosmic anticipation of the bliss to be.

II

In 597 the monk Augustine landed in Kent, bidden by Gregory to win the Angles to the church of Rome and the hope of the kingdom. No excess of Christian charity marked his attitude towards the Celtic monks whom he found labouring in the field before him. He studied tribal rivalries and handed to his successors a task they were able to carry to completion. Within seven decades a more or less

¹ Ad Maur. Imperat. Epist. ii., 62. Quoted by Milman *Latin Christianity*, iii., 140.

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paramount Northumbrian king accepted, at the Synod of Whitby (664) the spiritual claims of Rome; and the work of converting England effectively began.

Rome's scheme was simple. Monasteries were founded, refuges for those who, in despair at the flux of the outside world, sought to cultivate the complete Christian life, and centres from which the conquest of village and township could best be undertaken. Wherever a foothold could be secured in a community, a parish was mapped out, tithes collected and a priest provided. Grouping and re-grouping of parishes around the more central churches followed; bishoprics and archbishoprics were constituted. Year in, year out, the attack upon a virile and by no means unworthy paganism went on. Numerous as were the set-backs of the missionary movement, while the three or four major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms squabbled among themselves, neither their internecine raiding nor the swoop of Danish devastation and conquest could overcome the tenacity of monk and priest; and nothing is easier than to under-estimate the extent and quality of the work accomplished from 600 until the Norman conquest. A picture of the wooden church at Greenshead, Essex, as it appeared in 1748, portions of the present fabrics of Earls

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Barton and Barnack serve as reminders of the time, and help us to imagine the appearance of our first monasteries and parish churches, Canterbury and York, Lichfield and Glastonbury and all the lesser outposts along the Roman roads, in the forest clearances, in remote wilds, in watery desolations. If the imagination flag, a tabulation of the medieval monasteries which could boast foundation or reconstruction between 600 and 1066, and the writing down of a bead roll which boasts the compiler of *Beowulf*, Caedmon, Bede, Cynewulf, Alcuin, the unknown poets of the biblical narratives, nature and battle pieces, Aelfric and Dunstan will spur its lethargy. Who praises not King Alfred? Canute's pilgrimage to Rome and Edward the Confessor's building of Westminster are facts not readily forgotten. Upon familiar details it is useful to ruminate long enough to re-fix in prospective the extent, *the quantity*, of the missionary achievement. It was a very considerable performance.

A scrutiny of the more immediate actions of those who succeeded Gregory I in the Papacy yields a chequered page. An institution which needlessly abhorred everything Greek, including the language, stressed a difference of opinion

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between itself and the Emperor in Constantinople, Leo the Isaurian (717-741), concerning images, and which thereabouts claimed rule beyond *patrimonium Petri*, on the strength of the forged 'Donation of Constantine', which, not content with a spiritual alliance between itself and the earthly kingship of Charlemagne (800) went beyond the original idea of a Holy Roman Empire, made the tiara a symbol (after 850), compiled the 'False Decretals' (at the same time), finally quarrelled with the Greek Church and, falling upon evil days, employed force, used the methods of banditti or relied upon simony and the courtesan—that institution is quite properly suspect. Moreover, Rome had passed beyond a willingness to consider the decision of any general council as binding; it spoke of itself as the sole guardian of tradition and arbiter of doctrines throughout the world; its very decisions, it declared, possessed the power of binding and loosening even in the world to come. It can be conceded that Augustine brought to this island the faith of Constantinople not, in respect of the genius of the faith, improperly developed by the new practices of the years elapsed between the meeting of the Council of Constantinople and Gregory's bishopric; it can be allowed

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that the faith introduced reached England more or less undistorted by the nature of the Papal claims at the date the mission began ; but can it, one naturally inquires, be argued that, after 600, the ever-swelling boasts of Rome, the frequent contamination of her spiritual condition did not importantly affect the faith transmitted to and fostered in England ? The question is difficult to decide. When an English priest recited a belief in a " Catholic and Apostolic Church ", he expressed blind acquiescence in whatever forms of prayer and praise Rome might decree, whatever festivals and ceremonies ordain, whatever instruction give, whatever sacraments declare necessary, whatever episcopal pretensions promulgate or regulation of conduct utter. But it is probably true that the forms of prayer and praise, the festivals, ceremonies, instruction and sacraments were not, in the period under survey, tampered with by Rome in any fundamentally indefensible manner. Modification, as for instance in the use of music, the further development of hagiology on its worser side of veneration of relics and an ascription of miraculous power to saints and relics, the elaboration of ritual and imagery at many points—these all do but follow on premises which never

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excluded magical supernatural belief from admixing with the practice of really laudable virtues. With the growth of purely episcopal pretensions England, remote from the Italian city, was less concerned than Rome's nearer neighbours; and the worst repercussions of intermittent depravity in the mother church hardly disturbed this island. Somehow, fear had settled down heavily upon the western world. In England, as elsewhere, the Christian virtues, even where the Christian faith was in whole accepted (as in the monasteries) or in part (as in township and hamlet) were practised with too little joy. The great doom lingered.

The extent of Rome's achievement here before the Norman conquest was wide, its quality more worthy than one might imagine.

III

At the end of the eleventh century a fresh leaf in Papal policy was turned. Hildebrand (Gregory VII), a carpenter's son, entered the Papal chair in 1073. A ruler of the Holy Roman Empire had already told a preceding Pope that "universal pope and universal king" he could not be. Such was not the new

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bishop's theory. The declarations and actions of Hildebrand show that ordinary missionary methods, even if they succeeded in winning over kings to grant facilities for the conversion of their subjects from old faiths, were too slow and too liable to interruption for his liking. "Among princes I know not one who sets the honour of God before his own, or justice before gain",¹ he asserted. He saw a short cut to the stabilization of the faith in central and western Europe. Let persuasion continue its appeal to the individual baron and peasant, reformed orders of monks and strictly celibate priests labouring with utmost zeal, building in every place their dwellings, erecting the houses of their God, teaching the credal faith and guiding the Christian practices and virtues. But, since feudally organized society had to be taken as a fact, since offences, as it seemed, must needs come, since wars appeared necessary evils under feudal conditions, he proposed that the Papacy should not scruple to play off prince against prince until, by careful manipulation, the kingdoms of central and western Europe should be subsumed under the rule of the Papacy. Between dependent nations the Papacy could stop

¹ *The Empire and the Papacy*, Tout, p. 127.

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war or—on the opportunist view of doing good by force, a reasonable enough corollary—league them to conquer Mohammedanism. Inside the vassal states the Papacy could compel exactly those changes which it deemed assisting to the work of monk and priest. No one will deny that Pope Hildebrand was fired with a high imagination and filled with a deep sense of responsibility; but, in striving forcibly to place feudalism beneath Catholicism, in seeking to make the Church on earth still more completely the prototype of the kingdom to be, it must be allowed that he lost the similitude of a bishop in that of a king. By love the Pope won no man. He behaved imperiously to the greatest of princes. His contest with the ruler of the Holy Roman Empire (1077) Henry IV, is well known. The monks said that, when the Emperor made submission, he waited for three days in the courtyard of Alpine Canossa before receiving absolution. It was declared that he was garbed as a penitent; and men believed that he had been forced to stand barefoot in the snow. With William of Normandy, the conqueror of England, whose predatory banner a former Pope had blessed, Hildebrand's relations were less dramatic. Hildebrand bade William hold his acquisi-

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tion as a fief of the Papacy. That William refused; but the *status quo ante* in England remained. Bishops, priests, and monks continued to exercise freedom to come and go at the bidding of Rome; bishops and heads of monasteries continued to enjoy feudal rights of great value and priests kept their tithes by prescription. How far the clergy of each province—Canterbury and York—had developed the practice of meeting together—which practice operated in the direction of making the clergy a separate ‘estate’ in the realm—it is hard to say. A rudimentary canon law existed and applied to the clergy and laity at the date of the Conqueror’s accession; but archbishop Lanfranc secured from William special courts in which the bishops could hear ‘spiritual cases’. Such courts strengthened ecclesiastical control over the laity. Let the King, Rome argued, dispense the unpleasant criminal and common law—tempered by Church mercy. By ever ramifying canon law she herself would aim at controlling the conventions of marriage, legitimacy and inheritance; such control would render all the easier the teaching of marriage as an inviolable sacrament. The imposition of penance, she knew, required at times the sanction of authority. It might be expected that

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tithes would be more regularly paid if Church courts existed. All disputes between the clergy, all charges against clerics would, of course, fall within the orbit of these institutions. Lanfranc's gain was considerable.

In 1085 Hildebrand died ; though not before he had brought bloody fighting to the streets of his own city. Pope after Pope carried on his work, some well, few really weakly. The outworking of the policy in England is of absorbing interest. New foundations were laid upon the scarp of Durham, on the hill of Lincoln, in the hollow of Norwich, at Ely betwixt the fen-wash and the sunset. Demolitionary fires became common ; rebuilding and re-organization went on apace. The stones were set in witness and persuasion to righteousness. They rose in challenge too. Rufus, as he disagreed with Anselm over investiture, which, as exercised by such an one as himself was obviously a scandal, knew their menace full well. Henry I, glad that his brother had been such a fool as to turn Crusader at Rome's invitation, grabbed the crown on Rufus's death. Needing ecclesiastical support, Henry wisely compromised with Anselm, and recognized, as Langton afterwards reminded John, much of the 'freedom' for which the Church con-

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tended. At Henry's decease two decades of anarchy supervened: "Christ and his saints slept". But the monastery walls still rose; the luring yet fighting towers clomb higher. Henry Plantagenet received the permission of the only Englishman who ever became Pope to invade Ireland for the purpose of uniting the Celtic and Roman Churches. He was for long more interested in setting his face against the fullness of the concessions made by William I to Lanfranc. His conflict with Becket is notorious. Great prince as he was, he found the murdered archbishop more powerful than the living man; and, contemplating Henry, all Christendom stood aghast as before a pariah. Henry however, consoled himself with the Irish adventure. Who knows not the tale of the fierce *Cœur de lion* attracted to assume the Crusader's cross—he who lamented a Jerusalem unredeemed? While the eighty feet arches of the Peterborough front aspired in the new-found grace of the early-English style, his brother, the loser of Normandy, tried conclusions with the all-powerful see. With equanimity John dared an interdict which, though it allowed baptism and extreme unction, closed the churches of his land. He faced excommunication; but, when Innocent III

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ordered the French king to invade these shores, John surrendered shamelessly, laying "this England" at the "proud foot of a conqueror". His domain passed, in theory, in *patrimonium beati Petri*, a mere extension to lands upon the Tiber.¹ Thence, till the day of John's ignoble death (not long before which the Lackland took the Crusader's vow in order to wriggle out of his Magna Carta oath to an enraged barony) Innocent was full master of the situation; and a Papal legate resided here to see that obligations were not avoided.

Throughout Henry III's reign the relation of the realm to the Papacy was that of vassal to overlord. Till 1221, the *legatus a latere* stayed. After that, the archbishop of Canterbury accepted the rôle of *legatus natus*. A definite tribute sum marked the merging of royal sovereignty; and, in all, exactions from laity and clergy, equalling at times the king's income, flowed to Rome. Rebuilding and embellishment continued. Another Abbey, a St Paul's, a St Mary's Overy, shone white among the churches by running Thames; the angels sprang into stone in Lincoln's choir; squat

¹ See *Magna Carta Commemoration Essays*, by W. S. McKechine, G. B. Adams, R. Hist. Society, 1917, for this question.

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steeple perked above the green trees of a score counties. In witness and in triumph Rome builded, in aspiration stopping short of blatant pride. Yet the very success of Hildebrandine militancy, the accomplished subsumption of England under the Papacy, drove persuasion more than ever into the second place, and made it appear all the easier and more attractive to fill out within the vassal state the compulsory aspects of the scheme. The first colleges clustering in the Oxford lanes attracted Rome's attention. Learning, Rome knew, from experience on the continent (the 'Holy Office,' the Inquisition, came into being in 1252) might, at certain points, traverse revealed truth. Rome regarded such contradiction as a dangerous lie. Therefore she took care that teaching friars should profess to the turbulent students no more of Greek philosophy than the angelic doctor Thomas Aquinas of Paris reflected in his misreport of the sceptical Aristotle. A greater than Aquinas, Roger Bacon, *doctor mirabilis*, too fond of Mohammedan alchemy, suffered her displeasure. Rome was probably honest in repression. Anyway, in subject England, none said her nay. So the Renaissance was put back for over two centuries. With thoroughness Rome laboured to

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force all men to credal confession, to conformity with her practices and into the path of ecclesiastical virtue. She did not reflect that a compelled faith and required virtues have no savour at all.

By the *Mortmain* statute, Edward I did his best to check the bequest of private lands to the dead hand of monastic and like corporations. In the ' Model Parliament ' (1295) the lords spiritual found a place and spiritual peers continued to sit with the temporal peers in succeeding Parliaments. Led by archbishop Winchelsey, the clergy, in 1296, refused to pay the King's taxes, sheltering themselves behind the bull *Clericis laicos* in which Boniface VIII, who boasted openly that he had been set over all kings and kingdoms, and who especially wished to stop the warlike propensities of the English and French kings, forbade the clergy under him to pay taxes to the civil power. The convocations were, however, compelled to contribute. But not in the reign of Edward I, who next successfully resisted a claim of the Papacy that Scotland should be regarded as a fief, nor in that of Edward II, his successor, during whose reign the seat of the Papacy was removed from Rome to Avignon, was the theory of vassalage scotched. With successive Popes virtually prisoners of the French king

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at Avignon, Edward III found it desirable and possible to intermit the payment of John's tribute money to the Papacy ; there was little advantage in keeping a bargain which lined the pocket of the French king. The liability for tribute money was, after thirty odd years of irregularity in 1366, first definitely repudiated. Edward III and his Parliament forbade appeals from the ecclesiastical courts in this country to the final court in Rome, writing the word '*Praemunire*' across the statutes. The new law was designed to do little more than remedy mercenary abuses ; and the highest ecclesiastical court in this country, though a case could not henceforth be sent beyond that court, remained, as heretofore, a court of Rome. As a matter of fact, the statute proved unworkable. Another enactment—Provisors—struck, in like objection to Papal exaction, at the Papal attempt to secure fuller control over patronage to English livings. The Edwardian repudiation of vassaldom should have warned Rome to concentrate solely on the policy of persuasion. But Rome could make every allowance for the rise of nationalism and yet not regard the fracture of vassaldom as irreparable. The effect upon the Papal policy of refused tribute and the Edwardian legislation was

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certainly not of a monitory character.

An apologist for the Roman Church in England, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, would point to the monks as good landlords, declare that the Edwardian merchants owed much to the Cistercians, who had introduced sheep from Spain to their runs on the Yorkshire moorlands, and that the Church at least meant enough to the merchants to induce the building of churches in the decorated or later style, *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, throughout the west country and all East Anglia. He would urge that the Church took an interest in the earliest trade guilds and that holy-days, plenteous as starlings in a parish steeple, gave tradesmen and labourers more opportunities for relaxation than any worker to-day ever gets. He would seek to remind his hearers that Rome, long previously the mother of the drama in this land, did not, even to Reformation days, look with disfavour upon the decorous staging of miracle and mystery plays in the cobbled streets of York, Coventry, Wakefield, Chester or many another place. He would refer to the crowds that set forth in summer pilgrimage from the Tabard or clogged the flinty lanes to Walsingham. He would ask how, of a land musical with bells, the charge that persuasion counted

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for little can be levelled. He would speak of the poem *Pearl* as evidence of what the faith probably meant to many a less educated and humble person than the writer of that poetic gem and demand whether there were no saints such as Juliana of Norwich. He would contend that the notion of a church militant and a church triumphant together awaiting the consummation of all things was effectively grasped by the common people as a result of the endless services and rites of the Church.

To such an apologist there is this reply. Langland and Chaucer attacked the orthodox Christianity of their day; and their strictures bear the stamp of convinced veracity. Had not John of Gaunt, that Lancastrian demi-king, protected Wyclif of Balliol, translator of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue and questioner of the doctrine of transubstantiation, there can be no doubt that Rome would have exacted high penalty to deter others from similar temerity. Ecclesiastical lords of manors were no more willing to abolish serfdom in the Peasants' Revolt than were their secular companions. Henry IV could not, for all the anti-Roman tendency of his house, afford to run counter to the wish of the hierarchy. So the opening of the fifteenth

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century lit faggots beneath the chained bodies of Lollard heretics. Probably only the smallness of the work in hand availed to save these shores from the attentions of the Holy Office. Lollardism was driven underground—but not destroyed.

To the last Rome builded. King's College Chapel, Cambridge, St. George's, Windsor, Gloucester choir, the lantern of Fotheringhay, the fan-traceries of Westminster, the saints upon the roof of Norfolk Necton, the towers of Magdalen and Beverley, Long Melford nave—all are typical of expiring medievalism. Yet (Beverley's twin towers excepted?) the efforts of that age pall and fail of conviction in contrast with the best achievements in the Norman and early English architectural styles. What, in this last era, can suggest the strength of Durham, Tewkesbury or Selby, what can equal the poise of Salisbury, compare with the triple arches of Peterborough, the nave of St Mary the Virgin's in Shrewsbury or the interior of that other St Mary's by London River? A consideration of the stained glass in the great minster at York even suggests that the glaziers paned with lessening inspiration the faster the fifteenth century sped away. Perpendicular architecture is, in the main, the expression of a resting and somnolent pride.

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Rome, at the accession of Henry VIII could, indeed, find excuse for pausing in her labours. Much more success than failure had attended the attempt of the Papacy to apply the Hildebrandine policy in this land. Formal admission of vassal-dom England refused; yet, denying Rome the shadow, the English Crown left her to enjoy no small moiety of the substance. The power of the clergy was immense. Archbishops, bishops and mitred abbots sat with and outnumbered the temporal peers in Parliament. They and the lesser abbots and priors owned great lands and enjoyed the influence which territorial possession brought them.¹ The clergy as a whole formed an estate apart, self-legislating and voting in convocation their taxes. The courts in which they settled their disputes were independent of the Crown. To the Papacy the clergy regularly paid annates, the first year's emoluments of their individual livings.

"Credo in unum Deum. . . et unam sanctam Catholicam et Apostolicam Ecclesiam" daily declared thousands of priests at their eucharistic celebrations commonly called masses. That church was Rome, Rome exclusively. What they gabbled the populace believed. And that Church

¹ The Church probably gathered in one fifth the rental worth of the Kingdom.

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gripped the going out and the coming in of unwilling and willing laymen almost as securely as it held the daily walk of its priesthood within control. In theory every child, rich and poor, born into the King's realm was, at baptism, saved from original sin, admitted into a society which claimed, by a sacrament of the laying on of hands, to fit the child to receive the mass. This, however, he was permitted to partake of in 'one kind', the bread, only—a restriction marking a clean break, perhaps (if the Petrine pretensions be excluded) Rome's only big break with Constantinople and her own earlier tradition.¹ He was taught that the mass was the supreme propitiation for all sin. To the mass he was expected to come with a conscience temporarily clean. Thus, as he grew up, his every peccadillo and his crimes ranked as a matter of sacramental penance and absolution. He was bidden constantly to ask the supplication of the saints on his behalf, making an appeal especially to Mary, 'virgin mother of God', to use for him her intercessory powers with her great son. Shrines and relics he was taught to venerate and to hold them possessed of

¹ Rome would, however, regard this as a deviation of discipline and not of dogma. The French kings at their coronations were allowed both the species.

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talismanic properties. His marriage was a binding sacrament, his passage from this world sacramentally assisted. If he avoided mortal sin, he could not forfeit the kingdom, though he might be compelled to wait in purgatory for its coming. Whether the doom burst soon or late, he was saved—and comfortable. If the layman were rich, then much the more might he be comfortable. Pleasure and religious gain he might mix when he set out, a pilgrim, for Canterbury or Walsingham, for far Compostella or distant Rome. A gift of lands to a fraternity could purchase masses for his or his wife's departed soul, an allocation of treasure to the Papacy secure him an indulgence, that is to say the application to his soul at the will of bishop or Pope of the effects of the supererogatory works of the saints. In the matter of marriage, the Papacy was willing to grant dispensation for unions not too palpably within the limits of affinity or, on the subsequent allegation that a material fact had been overlooked, to declare that such a marriage had never really taken place. Equally to the poor and to the rich the priest was a plain necessity. He alone could recite the formulæ of the six lay sacraments. No priest, no salvation! Were not tithes (to keep the priest), Peter's pence (to

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fee the Pope) and the endurance of ecclesiastical courts a small price to pay for almost inescapable salvation? . . . That the great doom awaited no man questioned. Upon the wall separating nave from chancel in Wyclif's own church at Lutterworth it was depicted; displayed too in the last great stained window of our middle ages at Fairford, Gloucestershire. Yet, except in seasons of pestilence, drought and disaster, or in nights when loud tempest raved around thatch and gable, the consummation of all things seemed far—very far—away. Meanwhile, the Church considered herself the prototype of the expected kingdom.

IV

Henry VIII, aged eighteen, began his reign by marrying Catherine of Arragon, aged twenty-four, the virgin widow of his deceased brother, for which union the Papacy had, several years before, granted a dispensation. Above all things—a most intelligible wish for a monarch remembering the chaos of the Wars of the Roses—Henry desired an heir. In 1511 and 1513, Catherine gave him sons, but neither lived. In 1526, Henry, still a King without an heir, and growing “a

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perfect libertine", determined upon getting free from Catherine. Rome was, accordingly, asked to annul its earlier dispensation. The request would have been granted had not the Pope found himself to all intents and purposes a prisoner of Charles V, King of Spain and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Catherine's nephew. As it was, a commission of cardinal Wolsey, who under licence had, instead of the archbishop of Canterbury, acted for some years as legate, and cardinal Campeggio sat in London in 1529; but, no decision reached, the case was avocated to Rome, and Henry who, by this time, had selected his future queen, Anne Boleyn, was left in the lurch. Wolsey fell. On St Andrew's Day, 1529, Henry got to the point of boasting "he would denounce his holiness as a heretic and marry whom he pleased",¹ language strange in tenour on the part of one who had, a few years earlier, written against the challenger of Rome, Luther, in defence of the seven sacraments, and won for the English Crown the meaningless inscription which adorns our coins. Playing an astute game, Henry put through Parliament bills, striking, as in the Edwardian times, at Papal exaction, the while he made his last efforts

¹ *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, article *Catherine of Arragon*.

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to get the Papacy to grant his freedom. Next, the two convocations were charged with violating the *Præmunire* statute by the bare act of recognizing Wolsey's authority, and bought pardon only by payment of fines coupled with abject submission to their wilful monarch. Henceforth they were to address Henry as head of the Church as far as the law of Christ would allow, to call convocations only at his bidding and to make canons only as he should approve. Parliament secured an indemnity for the laity for complicity with the clergy in accepting Wolsey's authority. That preferment of a charge of *præmunire* against the clergy revealed Henry's purpose. If and while the law of *præmunire* ran, manifestly the court of the archbishop of Canterbury stood highest in the land. Nobody need have been surprised when, in 1533, Thomas Cranmer, the Cambridge tutor who had first made the suggestion that the archbishop of Canterbury should be bidden to decide the issue, was, to his utter amazement (for one thing he was a married man), appointed to Augustine's chair. Cranmer applied for and accepted his *pallium*, the traditional insignia of his office, from the Pope, but registered a special protest before his consecration, in which he made it plain he would regard

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the English sovereign as sole head of the Church in England and consider himself free to attempt such reformation as might seem requisite. An act in restraint of appeals declared that "this Realm of England is an Empire", and that there could be no move from its spiritual courts in the matter of wills, marriages and divorces. In May 1533, Cranmer pronounced the marriage of Catherine to Henry invalid and that with Anne Boleyn, secretly concluded in the previous January, "true, sincere, and perfect". Committed now to his iconoclast course, Henry lost no time in making the breach with Rome irreparable. Successive statutes incorporated the clerical submission, appropriated annates, stopped Peter's pence, approved the King's appointment of bishops, emphasized the Royal supremacy. Each enactment began at Henry's instigation and was shaped at the King's will. The voices of Fisher and More protested in vain. Late in the day, while the monasteries were being suppressed by an effective lay vicar-general, the palsied Papacy 'deposed' Henry. Paul III but wasted pontifical breath. Hot in passion, cool in judgment, Henry continued to flout Rome. Soon, however, he reached the limit of his 'protestantism'; and, discovering no

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further personal or national end to serve by effecting religious changes, he, for the rest of his reign—a matter of eight or nine years—opposed almost all alteration. As a concession to the abstract spirit of the Renaissance rather than as a sop to revived Lollardism or to the wishes of sectaries rejoicing in the Lutheran, Calvinist or Zwinglian attack upon Rome, he decreed the placing in each church of a chained translated *Bible*. For heretical backs the “ whip with six strings ” lay ready. In 1539, it was made a capital offence to deny transubstantiation and a felony to protest against the sufficiency of communion in one kind only, the rightness of celibacy of the clergy, the observance of vows of chastity, the expediency of private masses and the propriety of auricular confession.

Henry VIII, for an end personal and political, destroyed the indefinite but considerable rule of Rome in his realm. He founded a Church of England by the process of sharing between himself and Canterbury such of the powers of the Pope as seemed fitting for retention, putting the clergy, as he held, in their place (a far from cramped place with convocation not wholly destroyed, with bishops still peers of the realm and the tithe system intact) and leaving the

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main mass of traditional doctrine and practice—so he fondly supposed—unmodified. But defeat of the Papacy in England involved—necessarily involved—the scrutiny of the faith as taught by a maimed and discredited institution.

At Henry's death in 1547, the oligarchy and the primate who assumed the 'lay-papal' powers which Henry had appropriated to himself and to Canterbury, deliberately threw the faith into the melting pot. Within seven years, the crown in pawn and the primacy, by virtue of their supremacy in matters ecclesiastical backed, *pro forma*, by Parliament, had effected a doctrinal revolution and planned a complete revision of canon law. Authority required church attendance, under penalty, and conformity to the doctrine (to use the word in its widest possible sense to cover both teaching and practical requirement) stated or implied in the vernacular *Prayer Book* and in forty-two *Articles of Religion*, also in the mother tongue. The Constantinopolitan profession, the popular Apostles' creed, the *Quicumque vult* in use in the Roman Church were transferred, along with much ancient material, to the new book; but the doctrine embodied in the book and the prescribed additional articles, through much omission and by alteration, declined perceptibly

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from Roman standards. As sacraments, confirmation, penance, matrimony, orders and extreme unction disappeared ; but confirmation, marriage and orders remained as rites. Hagiology went. Baptism and the supper sacrament were simplified. However, the reform was short-lived. Just over a year from the death of Edward VI, (1553) Mary, tied in thrall to Spanish policy and filled with enmity against the English primate, moved Parliament to expunge practically all the ecclesiastical legislation of the two preceding reigns and knelt with her lords and commons (estates penitent, but unlike their Queen, not contrite enough to disgorge the spoils of nigh twenty years of confiscation !) at the feet of a legate of the Papacy and made re-submission to the distant see. The south and east of the country proved stubborn. Cranmer was burned. But the fires of Smithfield and Oxford subsided, when, in 1558, Elizabeth became Queen. She reinstituted the Church of England. Broadly speaking, the daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn chose the attitude of her father towards the clergy as an estate and his schismatic position in relation to the Papacy ; but she departed from her father's conservatism in adopting the standpoint of her brother's protectors

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and of the burnt archbishop when handling the problem of the interpretation and practice of the faith. In deciding the issue with the Papacy, Elizabeth had no alternative. Rome could scarcely, in the circumstances, unsay its stigma of illegitimacy, or Elizabeth agree to rule as a bastard Queen. Still, while Elizabeth rejected, in every sense, the suzerainty of the Papacy, she seemed to avoid, when securing the passage of her Act of Supremacy, language provocative to the Pope and showed no spite to the bishops and clergy who resigned rather than submit to her oversight in religious matters. In settling the doctrinal part of her problem and fixing an official faith, Elizabeth was under no special constraint ; but a definite trend had set in against Roman Catholic doctrine in London, Norwich and Bristol. The Queen, neither "*possédée*" nor "*maniée*" (thus Henry II of France of her sister) opportunely chose the Protestant solution which lay ready to her hand, mapped out by her brother's protectors and archbishop. Her Act of Uniformity required the formality of church attendance and the acceptance of the slightly modified Edwardian *Prayer Book*, with its appended *Articles*, afterwards reduced to thirty-nine. The canon

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law also received attention with a view to making it work in harmony with the doctrines fixed. Over and over again, the theological side of the Elizabethan settlement has been called a *via media*. True the creeds remain; but, as descriptive of the doctrines of the Edwardian book and its appendix or the practice taught and implied by that Edwardian liturgy, the term is a bad misnomer. The Elizabethan settlement showed a bearing much nearer to the tents of Luther, Calvin and Zwingli than to the camp of Rome. Not of course to the full extent to which, in matters of doctrine, the Elizabethan churchmen deviated from Rome by this acceptance of the Edwardian *Prayer Book* and the *Articles*, can it be said that those churchmen erred from a Constantinopolitan standard. In slight ways they got back nearer to ancient usage; in most respects they took up an attitude much further off from primitive teaching and wont. In the rejection of transubstantiation the break with the ancient churches was real. Once Elizabeth's will was made known in the matter of supremacy and uniformity, she expected obedience and enforced it—at least when her supremacy suffered challenge. The council of Trent sat, from 1545 to 1563, reforming abuses, pushing astronomical

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and similar questions aside and making explicit the faith held by Rome. So Romanism began to shake off the worst vices of mechanization. In 1570, the bull "*Regnans in excelsis*" excommunicated and deposed the Queen. Non-conforming 'Roman' Catholics, aided and abetted by Spain, caused her, in spite of the missioning Jesuits she executed, great embarrassment. They worked for religion; their moves, with justice, Elizabeth called political. On the other hand, malcontents, desiring more Lutheran or Calvinistic ways, indulged their private interpretation of the 'book'—the *Bible*,—betook themselves to the practice of nonconformity, and formed scattered non-episcopal separatist and independent churches, holding varying doctrinal tenets. Men called them 'Puritan'. Every now and again, ostentatious recalcitrance brought down upon them the hand of Tudor retribution. Elizabeth succeeded in making her Church work. Nine out of ten of her majesty's lieges in those spacious times considered themselves Englishmen first and Christians afterwards and, to the extent necessary, obliged the Queen.

The Elizabethan settlement did faulty duty during the reign of Christendom's "wisest fool". The Romanists were

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troublesome ; the nonconforming Puritans increased steadily in numbers. Not James, and certainly not his successor, advised by the order-loving but short-sighted archbishop Laud, was born to think in terms of toleration. Lack of goodwill drove the nonconforming Puritans to such enmity that Charles I found them, when armed strife came to pass, his bitterest adversaries ! A complete dislocation of the Elizabethan plan followed Charles's execution. The scattered Puritan non-episcopal separatist and independent churches—the Independents and the Presbyterians—enjoyed their spell of power in the land. They made life very dull for themselves and intolerable for the ungodly ! Witches were mercilessly persecuted. How far Cromwell liked his supporters is not always easy to determine. He wished not to persecute 'Elizabethan' Churchmen ; Jews returned to the land. Charles II remade the State Church, substantially on its Elizabethan basis. The *Prayer Book* was slightly revised. Comprehension of the Independents and Presbyterians Charles's ministers discussed ; but, in unworthy, if understandable, alternative, finally decided to apply against the Puritans the vindictive Clarendon Code. Feeling against the Romanists ran equally high at the end

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of Charles's reign. By the Test Act, every Roman Catholic was made ineligible to hold civic, military or naval office. Attempt was also made to prevent the accession of James, duke of York, who was certain, as all men knew, to prove an openly Romanist King. Under the circumstances, it would have been a cause of small surprise had the theoretically reasonable offer of indulgence, made by James II, on his accession, to all nonconforming bodies, Roman or Puritan, won the same acceptance from the harassed Puritans as it did from the Romanists. Luckily for the State Church, the victims of the Code looked the Stuart gift horse in the mouth, and the sanity they thus displayed helped both the official church and Puritan Nonconformity to survive a subtle attack. A tolerated Puritanism would have disappeared with speed; the State Church and constitutional government would have followed it to destruction. The misfit King's successors, William III and Mary, in an act of 1689, conceded toleration to all nonconforming trinitarian Protestants, if worshipping behind open doors.

It is not practicable, in little space, to deal with the divergencies of doctrine among nonconforming trinitarian Protestants. Their common denominator

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was dread of Rome and episcopalianism, coupled with a refusal to recognize confirmation as a rite, an unequal regard for the 'two' sacraments, a subordination of liturgy, a stressing of the preached word and a willingness to use lay assistance to their ministries. The rightness of Calvinist as against Arminian teaching, or vice versa, upon the possibility of salvation sharply sundered members of these bodies.

The Toleration Act envisaged a State Church, from the services of which, at the presumed wish of Puritan Non-conformity itself, that Puritan Non-conformity (of Independents—chiefly Baptists, Presbyterians and Quakers) might legally absent itself. That Non-conformity did not thereby forfeit the major rights of State Church membership. The non-tolerated Roman Catholics and the Socinians were popularly denied the title Christian. Outside the pale were Jews and foreigners.

Lest it be supposed that the State and the Establishment were more enlightened than the post-Tridentine Roman Church, which silenced Galilei, let it be added that the law of blasphemy was tightened in 1698 in such a way as to render extremely dangerous all criticism of Christianity and of the *Bible*.

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The next reign, that of Anne, showed a new intolerance of Nonconformity. The Queen deserves credit for resigning the annates which every monarch, save Mary, had, since Henry VIII's reign, enjoyed, in order to found Queen Anne's Bounty for the augmentation of poor livings. But Anne's Occasional Conformity Act striking at the right of the Puritan Nonconformist to take 'the sacrament' in the State Church for purposes of qualification as required by the Test Act, for office under municipality or government, and the Schism Act, preventing a Nonconformist from keeping a school, were retrograde measures. However, the pin-pricking soon abated, the acts being repealed.

Through the reigns of the four Georges, lethargy prevailed in the State Church. Every now and again, divines showed concern for the faith in general, challenged at vulnerable points by such as Voltaire and Rousseau, Hume, Gibbon, Paine, Byron, and Shelley. Sometimes the law was set in motion against so-called blasphemy. The worst feature of Anglicanism lay in a failure to widen its dull pietism into collective effort. The English Church, like the post-Tridentine Roman Church, had no official policy towards slavery. The great economic movement which we

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call the Industrial Revolution grew rank with social abuses. If it can be argued that the abuses did not concern the State Church as an institution, that it was not incumbent even upon the bench of lawn to protest against a dozen evils of which the virtual sale of thousands of workhouse children of six or seven into the lampless slavery of the mines and the tyranny of the buzzing factories were the worst, it cannot be maintained that, in the sphere of pure religion, the attitude of the Establishment towards its few zealots who tried to reach the down-trodden was at all creditable. The contented parsons of most parishes, ill-supervised as they were by bishops frequently absent from their dioceses, looked askance on the successful efforts of the Wesleys and Whitefield to present the faith to the poor of England and Wales as an anodyne to their unmistakable distress. Thus Methodism, which might have remained a guild within the State Church, was driven to cease the use of the Church liturgy and to organize itself as best it could, on a non-episcopal and democratic plan, outside the pale. Puritan Nonconformity from 1688 to 1830 likewise stagnated, though it enriched English hymnody.¹ Unitarians

¹ The contribution of Methodism to English hymnody was also enormous ; but, with marked exceptions, ephemeral.

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won preliminary toleration ; so also did the Roman Catholics. The chief praise for good works during the eighteenth century goes to the Quaker society.

Before turning the page upon this survey from the end of the middle ages to 1830, it is worth while to observe that, in medieval England, the folk were, theoretically, all Christians. In Elizabethan England few could live outside the ecclesiastical ken. When the Toleration Act was passed, in 1688, it was more or less fairly assumed that Christianity, in one form or another, interested the *whole populace*. Norwich, the second city in Great Britain, could have gone far to seat its whole population in its numerous churches. A careful survey suggests that, even in 1830, the number of folk who did not at least occasionally attend a church or chapel cannot have equalled *a tenth of the community*.

CHAPTER II

THE PRESENT

The State Church is with us still. Over it the King (State) and the primate exercise vague and indeterminable powers, the remnant of a 'lay papacy'; but, to save itself trouble, the State has conceded an Enabling Act which gives the Church a measure of self-government within the veto—on certain issues—of the legislature. The clergy, though their convocations remain, have quite ceased to be a separate estate of the realm; but the anomaly of bishops upon the seats of peers and the existence of beneficed clergy secured in their freeholds upon a tithe commutation system, are interesting historical survivals. (In passing, it must be observed that the Church of Wales was separated from the rest of the State Church and went her own path in 1920.) But is the faith declared by the State Church that which, in 1830, it proclaimed?

Lyell and Darwin lived in early Victorian times. The studies they established, geology and anthropology, simply gave the lie to orthodox cosmogony. Comte,

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Mill, Spencer, Huxley, Morley, Leslie Stephen all, while Victoria reigned, wrote cogent scepticism. Once a school of German critics, appreciating Spinoza and Reimarus, had, in the early nineteenth century, founded a higher criticism of the *Bible*, once an English colonial bishop, Colenso, had unwittingly called down upon himself the anathemas of his fellows for plain language about Noah's ark and the Pentateuch and Matthew Arnold had preened the courage of new convictions in critical essays, it followed, inevitably, that churchmen could not keep sacrosanct from scholars the pages of a scripture, most of which had been appropriated from Judaism. On the volumes of Buckle and Lecky the dust now too often gathers. These men re-taught professors of history a regard for truth. Thomson, young Swinburne, even Tennyson, at the end of his days, poured corroding verse upon varying aspects of Christianity. Well before Victoria's death, Thomas Hardy had taken up his pen and Mr George Bernard Shaw struggled from obscurity. Neither considered the susceptibilities of religious and social institutions. It is to the credit of the Victorian era that public-spirited men were found to set afoot popular education. By 1900, there were not many

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Englishmen who could not read. Charles Bradlaugh's tremendous fight for conscientious scruple was a victory over obscurant darkness. Looked at from many angles, Victoria's reign is seen to have been a vast re-Renascence, which Edwardian and Georgian letters, even more than the numerous and often unwanted material inventions of the Edwardian and Georgian eras, have conspired to expand. To this prodigious birth the World War has proved a bloody midwife.

Technically, the faith held by the Establishment is the profession of 1830, of 1688, of 1660—indeed, in all essential matters, the faith dictated at the Elizabethan settlement. But two schools of interpretation have emerged. Anglo-Catholics, vigorous since the 'Oxford Movement' days,¹ and non-Anglo-Catholics dispute. The former are divided. A strait sect interprets the *Prayer Book* in a pre-Elizabethan sense, disallowing addition to knowledge to contradict doctrine. It desires at least doctrinal re-union with Rome. The other section of Anglo-Catholics also interprets the *Prayer Book*—or at least much of it—in a pre-Elizabethan sense. It has not at

¹ From 1833, Keble, Pusey, Newman and others expounded, in *Tracts for the Times* their view (essentially Laudian) of the superiority of the Church (as a whole) to human institutions and the need for traditional sacramentalism.

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all carefully made up its mind as to the relation of doctrine to widening knowledge. Unlike the ostrich of fable, it is not quite happy to put its head in the sand of immutable dogma ; to change the metaphor, it gives every appearance of running with the orthodox hare and hunting with the heterodox hounds. (One hears of Anglo-Catholic 'modernist ritualists'—whatever the phrase may mean!) The Anglo-Catholics of this party seek no nexus with Rome which implies the slightest submission to the Pope ; they talk rather of *rapprochement* with the Eastern Churches. The non-Anglo-Catholics are a set of less cohering groups. Their interpretation of doctrine may be just anything which, opposite in sense to Anglo-Catholic teaching, the language of the Prayer Book and articles will permit. Most of them manifest the greatest possible concern for the harmony of their doctrine with the established results of science. Recently the right of the State Church to attempt revision of its liturgy within the reserved power of veto of the State was exercised. But, though formulæ were, with difficulty, found, which the great majority of bishops and a less preponderance of clergy and laity declared would hold together the diametrically opposed sections of the State Church in

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a new Erastianism, the State, itself more Protestant than the State Church, doubtful of the wisdom of the concessions made in the suggested new liturgy to the Anglo-Catholic parties, has thwarted the State Church and, in the course of a few months, refused its consent first to the 'deposited' and later to the 'revised deposited' book. With the State Church insisting upon the right of self-determination, the issue of disestablishment is being raised, not for the first time in recent political history. All sections of Anglicanism have learned to make use of music and hymnody in their services. Non-Anglo-Catholics, especially at places like St Martin's-in-the-Field and at Liverpool Cathedral, have developed occasional services of a non-liturgical type.

As a whole, the State Church cannot, since 1830, be accused of continued laxity in good works. The Oxford Movement produced at first much talk, the famous secession of Newman and Manning and others to Rome and little social effort. The opponents of the movement, Kingsley, Maurice and their companions, fixed on the neglect of collective Christian activity and made 'Christian' Socialism a factor in English life. Even if not with a single eye upon abstract truth, within the last fifty or sixty years, Anglicanism has

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done much for elementary education. Curiously enough, the living tractarians, the Anglo-Catholics, have stolen from their opponents the remains of the Christian Socialist thunder. Anglicanism does not speak now, in Burke's language, of the "dissidence of dissent" and is quite glad to enter with English Nonconformity into united social action. The canon law of the Church no longer counts seriously in the life of the nation.

Puritan Nonconformity is also with us. The Independents are seen now as Baptists (divided they are) and Congregationalists. Some Presbyterians adhere to the English, some to the Scotch, ways of organization. Quakers still exist. Additional to the older bodies, the Methodists remain upon the scene. The original Wesleyan body is numerous and visibly "at ease in Zion". The schisms from the parent stock have healed much during the last few decades; and, thanks to the conciliatory attitude of the virile Primitive Methodist Church towards its not too reasonable parent, it is likely that the main breaches in English Methodism will shortly disappear. There is a Salvation Army, Methodist in its birth.

The divergent doctrines professed by Puritan Nonconformity have not officially changed with lapsing years; the tenets of

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the Methodist bodies are, avowedly, those which have always been put forth. The impact of knowledge has been felt by Protestant Nonconformity more than by the State Church. Trust deeds and declarations yellow. No given Protestant Nonconformist can pretend that interpretation of doctrine within his church is not a matter of diverse voices. The pulpit has lost much of the appeal it exercised in the days of Spurgeon, Parker and Clifford. It may also be observed that time has wrought a willingness on the part of Protestantism to regard Roman Catholics as Christians, an understanding of the rôle of an episcopacy in the Anglican church, a greater use of liturgy; but killed interest, except among a few Baptists and Calvinistic Methodists, in the question of predestination versus free will. There is a general insistence upon simplicity of worship.

English Protestant Nonconformity was singularly effective in the life of late Victorian and Edwardian England. Doubtless the "Nonconformist conscience" was at times a crude faculty; but the Nonconformist was usually a Radical and therefore vigorous for social right. For many purposes most of these Nonconformists act in concert through a Free Church Council.

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The Roman Catholics have lived through their troublous times. A practically complete toleration is granted them; though even now a Jew, but not a Roman Catholic, may be Lord Chancellor of England. The Roman Catholic profession has evolved, but not materially altered, since Reformation days. Papal infallibility having been defined (1870) the Pope is stronger than ever before in all direction of doctrine, and the Papacy will yield no hostages to any knowledge which queries its guarded faith. The educated Roman Catholic divides his faith into two parts, the 'deposit of faith' and religious opinions commonly received but not held binding. Any appeal to him to define the deposit is met by quotation of the rule of the *Commonitorium* of Vincentius of Lerinum (434) "*Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*".¹ There is more room than is sometimes supposed for private opinion outside the matter of the deposit; but the private opinion of a Roman Catholic is never the expression of a free man. The evolutionary theory, for instance, is a permissible belief which the Church reluctantly allows. The poorly educated Catholic is definitely discouraged from reflection and bidden rest upon the declarations handed out to him through

¹ 'What everywhere, always, by all has been believed.'

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accredited *media*, his priests and his press. In the sphere of good works, it must be affirmed that, though Roman Catholicism is strongly insistent upon the externals of Christian practice, and, though such rarities as guild socialists exist within the Roman ranks, yet the faith stands an undeniable opponent of social progress. It biasses education, encourages anti-birth control, considers it its business to attack communism and is only too well content to cultivate mechanical virtue in slumdom and perennial dirt. Even in cultivating mechanical morality it largely fails. In 1906 a fifth of the prisoners in England and Wales were Romanist.¹

The Unitarian is fully emancipated. Because he denies the doctrine of the trinity, officially other Christians shun him.

There are in the country representatives of the Greek Church, Lutherans and others. There is one important American movement. The Christian Scientists make a selective interpretation of *New Testament* writings, teach that matter is limitation which the soul should use rather than consent to be bound by. The movement is spreading. It is capable of inspiring in many folk a quiet spirituality

¹ *Accounts and Papers*, 1906, xcix. The Romanist population is not even *now* much more than one in twenty !

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of outlook akin to that of the Quaker.

It is natural to work back to the question—in which, if any, of the divisions of the church universal now existent in England has the faith of Constantinople and, more particularly, the belief in the apocalyptic kingdom not unworthily survived? In any? Quibbling put aside, the answer is plain. Most of all in Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholics claim to repeat the ancient creed of Constantinople¹ sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase, in its ancient sense. They confess “God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth”, “Jesus Christ” the “son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds”, born through the Holy Ghost to a human virgin; the crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension of Jesus Christ they own; that “He shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead”, and that his “kingdom shall have no end” they aver; belief in the Holy Ghost “Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son” they acknowledge; they assert the existence of “one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church” with “one baptism for remission of sins”, and, approving the Pauline view that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom

¹ In its Chalcedonian form.

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of God", they "look for the resurrection of the Dead. And the Life of the world to come". To them the "one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" is a reality. In prayer and praise, in anniversaries and seasons, in ceremonies and in instruction in the scripture, in the matter of the celebration of the eucharist, in the keeping of the lesser sacraments, in that acquiescence in an episcopal order which marked the Christians of the Nicene age, in their admission of the need of good works before men, these Roman Catholics are not, on the whole, distant from the original professors of Constantinopolitan Christianity. They are far and away more orthodox than any of their fellow English Christians can justly claim to be. They still declare that they look towards the consummation of the great doomsday, that they do unequivocally believe "He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead" and that his "kingdom shall have no end".

At first sight, the recent encyclical of the "Most Holy Lord Pius XI", *Quas primas*, instituting a special feast of "the Kingship of Our Lord Jesus Christ" suggests that the Roman doctrine of the doom stands in danger of being watered down by meliorist influences and that Roman Catholics will be encouraged to

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regard the kingdom as a possibly present reality rather than a future event. The encyclical speaks of the Catholic Church, which is the kingdom of Christ on earth, destined to spread among all men and all nations as a cure for "the plague of secularism, its errors and impious activities".

An outside critic may justifiably argue that there is a certain looseness of thought in this encyclical comparable to the pronouncement of Leo XIII in an encyclical *Annum Sacrum* (1889) "His empire includes not only Catholic nations, not only baptized persons who, though of right belonging to the Church, have been led astray by error, or have been cut off from her by schism, but also all those who are outside the Christian faith; so that truly the whole of mankind is subject to the power of Jesus Christ." In one encyclical the Church and in the other the whole world is spoken of as part of a kingdom now existent and, as it were, independent of any kingdom which is to come. No Roman Catholic theologian would, however, admit that such Papal references to the Church and the world indicate the slightest weakening of the Church's preaching of the general judgment and the bliss and woe of the unique and universal order which is then to

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follow. The Church of Gregory and Hildebrand pictured itself as the kingdom on earth foreshadowing the kingdom of the doomsday. In like terms the Roman Pontificate is still thinking. The main criticism that can be levelled at Rome from a purely Christian point of view is not so much against the impure transmission of the faith as objection to the over-mechanization which spoils her practice.

Next in purity of orthodoxy to the Roman Catholic the Anglo-Catholic stands. If he be of the straighter sect, very little difference, allegiance to the Pope apart, between his standpoint and that of a Roman Catholic will be detectable; if he wear his label "with a difference", he will still be in broad sympathy with the orthodoxy of Constantinople, very near to Rome and the Eastern Churches in profession. The Anglo-Catholics of both parties are alive to the value of works as an evidence of faith. Of course *any* member of the State Church, even if he be non-Anglo-Catholic, will repeat the Constantinopolitan creed. But ask this or that non-Anglo-Catholic whether he does unfeignedly believe the *dicta* of Constantinople, and he will, as likely as not, make reply that he prefers to handle the creed as an 'historic docu-

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ment', the close acceptance of which is not incumbent upon him. He thereby secures himself freedom to treat such dogmas as the virgin birth, the resurrection, the ascension quite liberally. The phrase "one Catholick and Apostolick Church" is, to that individual Anglican, rich in meaning, because, in respect of ecclesiastical customs and prayer, of fixed anniversaries and seasons, he has much in common with his Roman Catholic and Anglo-Catholic friends. His views upon the eucharist are usually the crux of his difference and latitudinarian are his approvals and disapprovals of the other sacraments. Episcopacy he does not question; and good works he knows are necessary. But demand if he does believe unequivocally the credal climax, in the coming of the Lord, the supra-temporal kingdom and the resurrection of the body. He will be prone to confess his grandfather did literally believe, his father likewise; he himself, be he forty years of age, will say that he remembers his boyhood wonder and fear concerning an advent sign of the sun turned into darkness and the moon into blood, the shrivelling heavens, a trumpet, a descending Christ, open tombs and a judgment bar—visions after listening to special sermons and the singing of the *dies iræ*

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—sights seen on his way home through the churchyard in the dark nights just before the Christmas festivities came. But the trump, the descending Christ, the supra-temporal kingdom, a destroyed cosmos, the resurrection of the body, the separating of the sheep and goats, heaven and hell, he will now affirm are—parabolically explicable. He does not, in the matter of the climax of his faith, know what he believes. Imagine such a believer in the witness box, a new Paul before a new Agrippa. He will be forced to declare that the kingdom of heaven is not *so much* an event to occur as the spread of the faith in an imperfect world. This Christian will know that death will remove him from the mundane plane ; he will profess a belief in his own immortality. He will set forth that God and Christ and the saints will be nearer to him after death than they are now. That nearness he will affirm is another, indeed the supplementary aspect of, the kingdom. He will be far from clear in his answering. A Mohammedan, a Buddhist will call him a bad witness. So too will the Roman or Anglo-Catholic. He does *not* hold the orthodox faith.

The average erstwhile Puritan Non-conformist is equally heterodox. Among

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the Baptists and Presbyterians, one may find individuals who can repeat the Constantinopolitan creed, remembering its central expectation, more honestly than many an Anglican. The Congregationalists have no orthodoxy. What Methodists could honestly preach hell fire and damnation? Almost such stalwarts are no more. The Salvation Army is largely an excellent social institution. The Quaker is a Gallio towards credal things. Unitarianism, descended from Arianism (ancient heresy!) certainly cannot, in spite of Martineau, countenance Constantinople and Nicaea. It is no part of the purpose of this survey to blame; but the single duty of presenting fact is not to be evaded. By far the greater number of church goers in this country are not orthodox. Four millions of orthodox would be a heavy estimate.

Now a startling consideration must be added. Even as late as twenty-five years ago, one, driving a dog-cart through an East Anglian village on Sunday evening between the hours of six and eight, felt a sense of wrong-doing, of behaving as improperly as the four or five men loafing by the "Blue Boar" or the duckpond. In the towns there was already a growing laxity in church attendance; yet, even there, the churches

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were far from empty. To-day scarce a quarter of the inhabitants of England and Wales enter upon Sundays the churches. The churches, week by week, mean next to nothing to over thirty millions. It is safe to say that few of these thirty millions are orthodox Christians. Are any of these same rightly to be called unorthodox Christians? The latitudinarian will claim the not considerable number of those who, in isolation from the churches, consciously direct life upon chosen Christian values; he will count all those who, at one time under Christian influence, retain residual notions about a God, vague admiration for the life of Jesus, a bias towards a belief in immortality and with whom, though all habits of prayer, meditation and *Bible* reading that made demand upon personal effort are dead, other conventions and strange inhibitions unaccountably linger; he will put into the total the children in schools, who, though they do not belong to homes from which churchgoing is practised, daily assemble to hymns and school prayers and take perfunctory scripture lessons—he will enumerate them, even though he know the effect of such teaching upon this youth to be to no small degree evanescent. Yet, when all this enumeration is done,

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he will be forced to confess that his total is not encouraging. Of the thirty millions will he claim ten ?

Vicisti, Galilæe ? Has the pale Galilæan conquered ?

The life purpose of Jesus was the preaching of the preparation for and the coming of an apocalyptic kingdom. The early Christians rightly understood and perpetuated his teaching. Rome, when already an highly organized church not averse from considering herself the prototype of the promised kingdom, more or less faithfully transplanted the Christian creed and practice to our shores. Prior to the Reformation, she kept her witness, however faultily, however mechanistically, before the land. And still Rome holds aloft the torch of orthodoxy. She believes in herself as the kingdom, she believes in the kingdom to be. The derived churches, with all their variance from Rome, did, till recently, hold undeviatingly the doctrine of the doom and the kingdom consequent. It is plain that those derived churches speak now with uncertain voice. Some Anglo-Catholics stand side by side with Rome. So also (strange irony) do certain Baptists, Presbyterians and others. The rest constantly and readily talk of the kingdom of God upon earth ; they persistently avoid all doctrine of the

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last things. *A quarter of the population of England apparently professes Christianity. Of them, if the foregoing estimate be just, four millions may be called orthodox believers and six millions Christians unorthodox in varying degrees. Three quarters of the population make no outward gesture. Yet of those, for the sake of the utmost concession of argument, let it be supposed ten millions are unorthodox adherents to the faith. . . . "The remaining twenty millions—the half—are apathetic to Christianity."*

Why? Fear, which "first made the gods in heaven" being no longer a force to drive men to religion, it must follow that the appeal of Christianity is not great enough to effect attraction. That the "dread of something after death" no longer operates to swell church attendances is a proper state of affairs; but how does the appeal of Christianity fail? It fails because orthodox Christianity cannot be made to fit with most of the rest of organized experience; and unorthodoxy is only in small degree less in conflict with an ordered modern outlook. The first and second pages of this chapter pointed to a Victorian-Edwardian-Georgian re-Renascence. Increase of knowledge, like changes in social manners, works downwards from

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the higher levels of society to affect, in the long run, the very lowest strata. Galilei taught that the earth revolved around the sun. He convinced a few, though a Pope in council stood in his way. Shortly his opinion received acceptance among the educated classes. To-day, should a peasant advance the contention that the daily moving sun encircles the earth, he would be laughed at by his fellows. It is not possible to point to exactly the date at which English country-folk began to accept Renaissance astronomical views; the old beliefs just fell away. Similarly neither the Victorian man in the street nor his Edwardian nor Georgian successors studied Darwin and Wallace; yet the new doctrine of evolution received and continues to receive popularization, until the old tenet of a specific creation of man and woman from the rib of man, in the garden of Eden is as obsolete by the lathe as it is in the Radcliffe Camera. Ewald, Jastrow, Driver, Cheyne, Robertson Smith and Johns, to cite at random, were never the study of the masses; but it could be shown that, just after 1900, those who were framing the syllabuses of religious instruction in elementary schools became aware they must take the higher criticism of the *Old Testament* for granted. Renan,

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Seeley, Wrede, Pfleiderer, Harnack were never the literature of the many ; but the century was young when the minister of the City Temple fluttered the ecclesiastical doves with the New Theology movement, which, discussed widely in the press, began to work effects more far-reaching than most folk have since realized. Ordinary persons clapped the plays of Mr G. B. Shaw, the kindly Voltaire of the times ; Mr H. G. Wells, widener of horizons, was read in isolated parsonages. A cult of Nietzsche set in among undergraduates. Solvent on solvent fell upon the conventions of the earliest nineteen-hundreds. The age showed a temper to destroy. Even the House of Lords quaked in jeopardy ! . . . There came a War. The War, it must again be insisted, brought the new freedom of thought to full birth. For four ghastly years, men put, not questions about the *Old Testament* or the *New*, but such final enquiries as—is there a beneficent God at all ? And, a million mothers and lovers asked—does anything, does even love, outlive and remain ? The futility of particular prayer was demonstrated on a grand scale ; it was as idle to pray for protection of loved ones from German bombs and mines as for a change in the weather. Murder being systematized,

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much conventional morality went by the board. Marriage, as an institution based on ecclesiastical sanctions, was damaged beyond rehabilitation. The twenty millions are not, without ground and reason, apathetic to Christianity. The rough and ready philosophizing of the bloody years once done, apathy has followed. Petrol has not emptied the churches.

"I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible." Can we now-a-days express it like that? "Father" is anthropomorphic and masculine; "maker" involves an antinomy discovered by every child who asks the question, "But, mother, who made God?" "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds . . . Begotten, not made, . . . Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man." Antiquated mythology is a mild description; moreover, in plain English, the sex ideas involved are abhorrent. And the doctrine of a fall, latent in the mention of the need for salvation, is contrary to the theory of evolution, even if it does not arraign a creator for bad workmanship. " . . . crucified . . .

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under Pontius Pilate . . . suffered . . . buried." Yes—a man. "And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures." No—believed to have risen. "And ascended into heaven, And sitteth at the right hand of the Father." Are the contemporaries of Einstein really to hold such Ptolemaic *naïveté* for a truth? "And he shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead." Jeremy Taylor no longer affrights with that famous sermon on the day of judgment, the counterpart of which no cathedral canon—not that such an one is likely for a moment to rise to like heights of phantasy—dare utter ". . . Whose kingdom shall have no end." A kingdom consequent upon a day of judgment is unthinkable. "And . . . in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets." Meaningless. I believe "One Catholick and Apostolick Church." As an historic fact—yes. "One baptism for the remission of sins?" The idea of cancellation of sins by any rites is ethically repellent. "I look for the Resurrection of the dead. And the life of the world to come." Some do; some cannot. This is that eternal question.

"*Aut credo aut nihil*" declare the

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orthodox of Rome and of Anglo-Catholicism. If that be the choice, the twenty millions answer "*nihil*". "But we do not demand '*credo*'" protest the heterodox of non-Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism and Nonconformity. To that the fraction of the twenty millions which retains interest replies—When you definitely *repudiate* "*credo*" at its palpably absurd points, when you cease from the plausibility and speciousness with which you appropriated and buried Thomas Hardy in the Abbey and with which you welcomed Dr Albert Schweitzer to England, not as a revolutionary historian as well as an African missionary and interpreter of Bach, but as the two latter only, when you stop patronizing us and talking down to our supposed levels of ignorance, then, and not till then, will we listen. Most of you appear rankly dishonest or self deceived. Has no Cambridge professor a message? Dr Barnes' faith *does* offend. Dr Barnes is lashing the air or thrashing a dead horse—we don't know which. What he says we heard two decades ago from one whom W. T. Stead called the Chrysostom of the day; we listened to utterances far less nebulously phrased. The Dean of St. Paul's is a philosopher—ill at ease in a straitened way. Congregationalism and Unitarianism, to

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which many looked, appear emasculated. Where are there leaders who can call a spade a spade ? Dr Campbell, whom we love, is a lost leader ; Clifford is dead ; while he was yet but little known, darkness closed upon Stanley Mellor. Set aside the question of what one should believe, is it not painful that, among you heterodox, few, like Canon Raven, can be found to tell his Church that it has no moral right to retain impoverishing mining royalties ? We do doubt whether this faith can survive.

It is, of course, only fair to point out that, while those among the twenty millions who retain their interest in religion, challenge non-Anglo-Catholics and Nonconformists in this way, some among the twenty millions have turned to spurious cults and rank heathenism. Spiritualism is an insult to the soul—but it is an understandable growth. Mr Bram Stoker's *Dracula* has created an obscene religiosity—which is less intelligible.

The end of a long survey is reached. *Vicisti, Galilæe ?* In the plain sense, Jesus, preacher of the preparation for an apocalyptic kingdom, Jesus, martyr for his ideal, has failed. Jesus, in his failure, still, though nobody is quite sure how, counts loftily among the leaders of men.

CHAPTER III

THE FUTURE

What is the future of Christianity in this land? Has it a future?

Writing to Corinth, Paul laboured under no delusion as to the reception his gospel would receive of the Greeks. "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness." To suggest that modern England resembles ancient Corinth or Athens may appear a strange conceit. Yet, for all their shortcomings, England and Germany in this age are nearer to ancient Greece than have been any states or countries of the intervening time. The quest for knowledge and the ability to reflect upon it, the quick imagination, seen in dramatic and poetic art, in painting and in sculpture and in the will towards the cult of civic beauty, the love of the open, the attachment of a maritime republic to the ideal of freedom, these qualities were

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found among the Athenians, and these qualities are also, in varying measures, Germanic and our own—even as Athenian slavery finds a parallel in those glaring economic inequalities of modern capitalism, which, to our disgrace, are far and away more pronounced in this country than in Germany, but which the best minds of both peoples unceasingly condemn. The educated Greek desired to unify his experience, to possess a working philosophy of life. So also does the educated Englishman. To the Greeks the bare idea 'Christianity a complete philosophy of life' rang hollow with foolishness; with us too it is a beaten banner. *The contention* which, it has been suggested, forms the main objection of the twenty millions of our people to any form of the Christian claim, *that the profession of Christianity shall not, in the life of any individual man, contradict the rest, or any part, of his organized experience, is not to be gainsaid.*

It is evident that interest in historical studies will increasingly bring Gautama, Jesus and Mohammed, the founders of the chief world religions, before the bar of History. Before that bar, the tradition of the churches that Jesus was divine is of no value. Before it, the New Testament is only evidence when subjected to the

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same canons of criticism as the Old Testament or Livy ; yet, except by the German school which follows Reimarus—of whom Dr. Albert Schweitzer is the latest and most renowned disciple—and by isolated writers such as Renan, it is notorious that the eastern documents which compose the New Testament have not received and still do not obtain a quite ingenuous treatment. The theologians handle them, the gospels in particular, as though they were perquisites or sacred territory. History demands to be left to work in its own way. It cannot be moved by special pleading. More and more dispassionately the life work of the great Jew will, in the years immediately ahead, be exhibited ; the faith which his disciples founded at his death, a cult among cults, will be demonstrated ; as enquiry passes beyond the New Testament writings, the almost endless evidence that can be yielded by the centuries between the earliest and the twentieth will be sifted, and the record of the churches be set in a dry light. It seems likely that the picture which will ultimately be produced will be substantially that outlined in the first chapter of this book. Should such prove the case, how much in the life of Jesus or in the record of Christianity is really worth the serious

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attention of those who would use any part of the life or the record to build into a valid philosophy of life ?

There is a famous canvas, the work of Hermann Clementz. As one beholds a white-robed figure, pale against the following crowd and the up-sweeping black of the sky, his mother fallen at his side, Mary of Magdala impassioned at his feet, as one catches sight of the two red-garbed executioners, the one tall, half naked, sinister, a heavy cross being made ready at his feet, the other short, grey with years, gripping in his left hand a hammer, in the right cruel nails, as one lifts one's eyes to where the slightly rifted gloom throws spectral light upon the two bandits between whose crosses the central tree must soon be jerked into the insensate rock, is one necessarily distracted by the thought that shortly a human corpse, wet with night dew, will mock the moonrise behind the accursed hill ? Far otherwise the effect of the picture. . . . That, lone upon the hills of Nazareth, yea and where foxes had holes and the birds of the air their nests, Jesus cultivated the inner life, and once could stand as it were "transfigured before them" ; that he found a vocation (how little the impossibility of his purpose of compelling the kingdom matters !) ;

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that, with special application to his notion of the kingdom, he uttered words of communism and anarchy, which, though they cannot be acted upon as the working politics of a highly organized state (*we* simply cannot "take no thought for . . . life" and live as the lilies and ravens towards a god), are inspiration and challenge to build up the communism to which civilization must eventually come; that among his sayings are lasting aphorisms and certain parables less foreshortened in application than the rest (the prodigal son, the good Samaritan, the house upon the rock are examples in point); that he once encountered and spoke as he did to the accusers of a woman taken in adultery; that he came at last to dark martyrdom—of such, to the writer, is the worth of the Jew, Jesus, and for such qualities and sayings, it is scarcely open to doubt, the life of Jesus will be valued by the educated democracy of the years to be.

Great as is the significance of Jesus, the contributions which the early faith and historic Christianity, down to our own day, can lay at the door of the treasury of meditation are scarcely less wonderful.

Granted, the debit against the early faith is serious.

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“ From the instant ” wrote J. H. Shorthouse “ that the founder of Christianity left the earth, perhaps even before, (the) ghastly spectre of superstition ranged itself side by side with the advancing faith.”¹

No student of those days dare dissent. So great an apostle as Paul did not (as the first chapter of this book has pointed out) rise clear of superstition. But who, among discerning critics, would willingly obliterate the record of the deepest experiences of the great missionary to the Gentiles? The utterance which stands as our thirteenth chapter of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthian church is a classic. And consider these words from the end of the second letter to the same ecclesia.

“ Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; . . .

¹ *John Inglesant*, p. 443.

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It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. . . . And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Here is the clearest evidence of the phenomenon of mysticism; here is incomparable autobiography. Who, readily, would lose the model and apology for prayer enshrined in the liturgy of Chrysostom, the golden-tongued ascetic of Constantinople? "Fulfil now, O Lord,

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the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth . . .” Away in a Judæan cell, Jerome gave the world the Vulgate, the first monument of monastic industry. Who can walk in the Flavian amphitheatre unennobled by the thought of the martyrdoms that soaked its sand in blood?

Turn to the record of Rome once again. The author of *John Inglesant* summarizes forcibly.

This is what the Church of Rome has ever done. She has traded upon the highest instincts of humanity, upon its faith and love, its passionate remorse, its self-abnegation and denial, its imagination and yearning after the unseen. It has based its system upon the profoundest truths and upon this platform it has raised a power which has, whether foreseen by its authors or not, played the part of human tyranny, greed, and cruelty. To support this system it has habitually set itself to suppress knowledge and freedom of thought, before thought had taught itself to grapple with religious subjects, because it foresaw that this would follow. It has, therefore, for the sake of preserving intact

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its dogma, risked the growth and welfare of humanity, and has, in the eyes of all except those who value this dogma above all other things, constituted itself the enemy of the human race.¹

The indictment is sound. But Short-house would gladly have allowed to Rome the right to answer that condemnation by pointing to her saints. Francis of Assisi, Joan of Arc, Francis Xavier belong, like Jesus, to the ages; and there are lesser lights innumerable in the studded firmament of Rome. Set all other gifts aside, how shall we sufficiently thank Roman Catholicism (though not the *curia*!) for the benefaction of Gothic architecture?

Protestantism, like Romanism, lies open to stricture. Yet Protestantism has yielded stalwart leaders of the searchers after God, Huss and Wycliffe, Luther and Cranmer, Bunyan and Ken, Wesley and Carey—even a very great company. Protestantism has laid before us an open *Bible*. Amid the extensive rubbish of its hymnody is much of universal worth. But the greatest service of Protestantism to the race is the fact that, a disruptive and selective agent, it has, without foreseeing it, cast orthodox Christianity into the melting pot.

¹ p. 442.

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" . . . whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Such were the words of Paul to the Philippians. History reiterates his saying. We ought certainly to "think on these things," which in the Christian record are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, of virtue and of praise ; they are readily distinguishable from the dross. Giving them their due, but not excessive, weight, we are bound to put thus much of the life of Jesus and thus much of the Christian record side by side with that which is of value in the legacy of the past. That minimum matters to our modern day. But how does it matter ? What may look like a digression becomes necessary.

The demand voiced by a character in the story of Job, "Can'st thou by searching find out God ?" must always receive the negative answer. The citizenship of the morrow will dwell in a universe of discourse wider by far than ours. It will possess a 'scientific' knowledge we cannot span ; the secrets of nature from the hormone to the galaxy will lie, in large

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measure, bared before it. Not for a moment will it be less concerned than we

... for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized.¹

but, unlike us, it will gladly halt at the bounds of ratiocination. Definite limits there are. It is true that the philosophic system of Spinoza purports to survey all things *sub specie æternitatis* and promises to its disciples the attainment of *amor intellectualis dei*. It is also true that, if a man accept the metaphysic of Berkeley, he will hold that the whole objective world exists only for the mind, that what we call 'matter' is but an inference; from which position he may proceed, strengthened rather than weakened by an examination of Kant, to grasp the psychology of Ward (who founded English psychology upon a Berkeleyan basis) and thence to reach a standpoint at which he will regard all spatial and temporal arrangement as the work of mind; he may indeed embrace J. H. Green's conception of the timeless self and take up the view that he, man, is one with the immaterial, timeless, spaceless fundamentum of all things. Such a

¹ *Ode—Intimations of Immortality*—Wordsworth.

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position is of considerable strength. But even in the intellectual world of the morrow, the force of such a philosophy will not be felt by more than a limited number ; and the question will arise over and over again—Is there no other than the intellectual path to the Ultimate, no simpler way to God ?

To many it has seemed that there is ; that Reality, though it is questionably to be apprehended by the intellect, may be enjoyed in feeling, that the Ultimate does break upon, or well up within, and suffuse the mind of man. Cloud-wrack, scudding in “ April’s ivory moonlight ” when spring has ridden in “ on winter’s traces ”, roses in June, rims of thunder low upon a heat-hazed autumn landscape of this England we love so well, lone stars in winter that “ Ride radiantly ” to keep their pre-destined trysts of occultation and eclipse, do not these, poetry and music, the light of an human eye, the clutch of a baby’s finger, a thousand cloudy messengers encountered in the common ways of life avail—and unaccountably avail—to fill the mind, unvexed by regret for any critical default of conduct and awake to the sorrows of the world, with an immediacy of triumphant peace ? No man can compel that peace to fall nor any man force it to stay. It is not the

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prerogative of education. It cannot be selfishly enjoyed. It leads to creative activity or altruistic action.

But this is not that greater revelation which some declare possible. Such intimations as these of which this page has spoken are (so we are assured on the unimpeachable witness of careful philosophers) naught but the innumerable witnesses that bid man take to himself the liberty to love the universe, until, in some hour of his least expectation, all barriers between himself and the Ultimate drop away and ecstasy reign—not indeed to be revived at will in memory, but to possess unique authority for his remaining days and be an earnest of similar experience at not frequent intervals upon the roadway.

“I saw the Lord, high and lifted up,” declared Isaiah in authentic vision. Ecstasy the contemplative Gautama reached. Such rapture—what else can the transfiguration story imply?—Jesus knew. Paul “whether in the body . . . or whether out of the body . . . caught up to the third heaven” transcended time and space. Thrice Plotinus attained. Erigena, Francis of Assisi, Dante Alighieri, Catharine of Sienna, Theresa, were of the initiate band; priest, monk and nun yearned toward the beatific vision. Vaughan the

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Silurist, William Blake, were not they of the company elect ? Beethoven and Wagner, certainly Wordsworth, most utterly Shelley—a soul more luminous than clouds aflame with on-bursting day-spring—perhaps the tragic Stephen Phillips, surely Francis Thompson. These are but names taken at random ; the possible list would be extremely long.

There is then, as it were, a lesser and a greater heightening of 'feeling-tone', the day to day contacts with what, because of the 'immediacy' of the experience, men call the Ultimate and, over and above those happenings, the rarer exaltations of the journey. To these experiences, for want of a better term, the adjective mystical is applied. The appellation is not happy.

Natural enough it is that, of the recorded 'mysticism' of the past, the greater number of experiences should be of those who were devotees of this or that religion. But "the aim of mysticism", finely observes Mr W. K. Fleming, "is not platitude but poignant and adventurous purpose ; not truism but, at whatever cost, truth".¹ Unless the writer of this book be in mistake, the 'adventurous purpose' of to-morrow will carry us further and far from 'religion-induced',

¹ *New Statesman*, Feb. 25th, 1928.

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from 'religion-referred' mysticism and increasingly lead men to recognize the possibility of 'humanity and nature provoked' peace and joy. Why? Intellectual probity, according to a man's day and generation, is a *sine quâ non* of vision. No man can give assent to a known intellectual falsehood and persuade himself that he sees. Dogma will die ; man's kinship with

. . . . sound and odour, form and hue,
And mind and clay and worm and star¹

lasts unchangingly.

It is well, at the risk of a slight prolixity, to make the argument clear.

I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air.
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought
And rolls through all things.²

Thus, Wordsworth, at one with him
who spoke of

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
That Beauty in which all things work and move.³

¹ *The Father of the Forest*.—Sir W. Watson.

² " *Lines above Tintern Abbey. . . .*"

³ *Adonais*—Shelley.

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If greater precision in description of the experience to which he refers be demanded of Wordsworth, he does not fail. He speaks of a

serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While, with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the inner life of things.¹

A recent novelist has equally well indicated the effect and character of the insurgent joy

“ . . . there came to me ” (saddened with a sense of the injustice of things, she had sought the apple attic of the old farmhouse) “ I cannot tell whence, a most powerful sweetness that had never come to me afore. It was not religious, like the goodness of a text heard at a preaching. It was beyond that. It was as if a creature, made all of light, had come on a sudden from a great way off, and nestled in my bosom. On all things there came a fair, lovely look, as if a different air stood over them. It is a look that seems ready to come sometimes on those gleamy mornings after rain, when they

¹ *loc. cit.*

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say, 'So fair the day, the cuckoo is going to heaven'. Only this was not of the day, but of summat beyond it. I cared not to ask what it was."¹

It is quite unnecessary to debate whether Wordsworth and Mary Webb are, in the extracts quoted, referring to minor or major experiences in 'humanity and nature provoked' mysticism. It is a sad pity that the gift of vision, the birthright of the young, should, in so many of us, be

By uniform control of after years
. . . abated or suppressed.

But it is a supreme comfort that, if we will cherish our possession, it may persist

Through every change of growth and of decay,
Pre-eminent till death.²

Reason must not be contradicted. It must be trusted if we would walk across Hyde Park corner or measure the temperature of a planet. It must not be abused if we would, with any consistency at all, feel and act. But it has limitations. The child's question, already once referred to, "But, mother, who made God?" has noted one of them. Space,

¹ *Precious Bane*, p. 62, Mary Webb. Cf. *The Brothers Karamazov*, 4 (end of) III, vii.—F. Dostoevsky.

² *The Prelude*, Wordsworth.

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time, motion, causation, gravitation, objective reality, all are hypotheses.

Thou can'st not prove the Nameless, O my son,
Thou can'st not prove the world thou movest in,
Thou can'st not prove that thou art body alone,
Thou can'st not prove that thou art spirit above,
Nor can'st thou prove that thou art both in one ;
Thou can'st not prove thou art immortal, no
Nor yet that thou art mortal—nay, my son,
Thou can'st not prove that I who speak with
thee,
Am not thyself in converse with thyself,
For nothing worthy proving can be proved,
Nor yet disproven : ¹

Yet somewhere shall a man place trust.
This heightening of feeling has indescribable immediacy ; it satisfies. Let us clear the explanatory word ' God ' out of our thought if we cannot, with Spinoza, understand it as ' Nature ', from stellate dust to our fellow-men. Let us *reason honestly*, then contemplate silently that we may *feel intuitively* ; so much done, we shall *act with justice* and add unto our peace.

Mysticism is, to use an Aristotelian term, νοῦς ποιητικός. Mysticism is the crown of philosophy ; the core of religion, if, as distinct from philosophy, religion is an expression of any connotation at all.
The digression ends.

¹ *The Ancient Sage*—Tennyson.

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Matthew Arnold once defined the Church of England as "a great national society for the promotion of goodness".¹ He had the root of the matter in him ; but his definition is not adequate. If there is to be a 'Church of the Future', it must refuse to be a society other than intellectually free, take gladly of the whole moral, æsthetic and mystical legacy of the ages, and, in banded fair adventure, seek *unrewarded* (for immortality does not concern the timeless adventurer) self-realization in God—in God, the Ultimate which is beyond all categories of time and space, beyond good and evil, love or hate, beauty or ugliness ; in God, which is known in revelation sufficient unto mortal man. To the building of that Church of the Churches, Jesus, the early Christian cult, Rome, the Eastern Ecclesiæ and Protestantism can yield an incomparable dower—gifts, it so befalls, greater than Buddhism and Mohammedanism can bring. It is to such an end that all that is true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, that which is of virtue and of praise whether in the life of the Jew or his followers, in all times and climes, should be put. It has no other legitimate usage. *There is, literally, no future before Christianity*

¹ *Last Essays on Church and Religion*, p. 156.

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save to die into the new life of a wider than Christian philosophy—or religion. The degree of organization which such a Church of the Future would take is an interesting problem. Where the spirit lives it can, if so it wills, clothe itself with flesh.

These speculations complete, it will be well to come back from the distant future to forecast proximate probability.

The fact that Roman Catholicism has set its face against birth-control is significant. For some years to come the number of babies born of Catholic parentage will show an increase upon its present ratio to non-Catholic births. But the climb will not continue indefinitely. For the good of her soul and the welfare of her church, the Roman Catholic mother will not, a few years on, face the drawbacks which, however much the economic conditions of life be ameliorated, are associated with over-production of offspring, any more than Roman Catholic working men will indefinitely be content to believe the dicta of priests, whose hold is the surer where poverty is most rife, that Socialism is an evil plant. (No doubt many Roman Catholic priests would declare that they have no objection to Liberalism and Socialism. Cardinal Manning backed the London dockers on strike in 1889. A new Roman Catholic

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archbishop has declared that employers must pay a living wage or the order go. Mr G. K. Chesterton praises liberty. Mr Wheatley has held a post in a Socialist cabinet. There are exceptions that test every rule. Socialism has no friend in the Roman Church.) Inside its elementary schools, Roman Catholicism, to a degree more marked than in other 'unprovided' elementary schools, gives a denominational teaching. Many consider that the giving of grants of public money to the Roman Catholic elementary schools warrants a much stricter surveillance of the institutions. Outside these schools, attended, for the most part, by the Roman Catholic poor, the religious instruction of the Roman Catholic child is, because of the character of the Roman faith and church, far more thorough and less to be avoided or forgotten by the child itself than the doctrine of non-Roman Catholic denominational schools and homes. For Roman Catholicism the prospect is that the number of births, rather than administrative laxity and Roman Catholic educational thoroughness, will temporarily operate to yield an increase of adherents to the Roman profession. But, apart from this something more than maintenance by the Roman Church of numbers recruited from her own particular families,

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is it likely that Roman Catholicism will attract either the proselyte from the other Christian churches or widely win from the non-Christian members of the community ? Proselytes from the Anglo-Catholic ranks will be increasingly numerous. The dogmatism, the æsthetic and pseudo-æsthetic appeal of Romanism will progressively attract those who have learned, under the auspices of Anglo-Catholicism, their first lessons in intellectual subordination and felt the appeal of age-old ritual. Ever and anon also, men and women of non-Anglo-Catholic tendencies will turn to the Roman Church in despair of finding other harbourage.

In making appeal to the mass of men and women outside the churches, Rome will strive for advertisement and the public platform. Announcements will stare folk in the face from the hoardings and become familiar in bus and tube ; the British love of fair play will cede, in debate and press, an open forum. But Rome can never vary her message of a divine Jesus, a super-natural birth of the faith, a mainly irrational creed ; she cannot hide her historical record or declare anything but a miraculous sacramental system (the centre and culmination of which is the lie upon the altar) administered by an infallible Pope,

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by bishops and priests endowed with powers that lift them so much above the plane of ordinary men that a Catholic will kiss the hands of a priest who has celebrated a first mass. What can Rome accomplish with that her unalterable case proclaimed in the achieved forum? Even if she could be sure of no opposition, she could not conceivably win. Any full advocacy of the Roman case must kill the cause. It will be laughed out of court. Rome will not die in a day or a century. Die she will. Education will slowly kill her. The religion of to-morrow can look for nothing from Rome.

Reference has been made to the fact that Parliament has twice recently refused to sanction alteration in the Anglican liturgy. Not unnaturally a demand for self-determination has arisen; and the issue of disestablishment is revived. So far, the demand for self-determination is strong and the will to disestablishment weak. If Anglicanism asks for self-determination and, *inter alia*, is willing to face the enormous loss of social prestige that will follow when bishops are plain misters and clergymen, no longer *ex-officio* servants of the State (whose first oath, upon induction, is to the King), find a local standing beside, say, Baptist ministers, then, in admiration of the claim,

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the State can scarce withhold the boon. If the Church by law established does not request the change, the State, wiser than the children of light, must insist that the Church take it; for, negatively, the privileged position of Anglicanism is unfair to the great majority of non-Anglicans, to Agnostic, Roman Catholic, and Protestant Nonconformist Englishmen; and, positively, religion is not the business of any state. But (a matter so far overlooked by those discussing the problem) the State cannot with justice contemplate wholesale surrender of the parish churches and cathedrals of the land to disestablished Anglicanism; inasmuch as the buildings are, to the extent to which they are pre-Reformation in origin, Roman Catholic and 'English' and, to the extent to which they are post-Reformation, 'Established Church' and therefore national property. When disestablishment comes, the State ought to schedule most pre-nineteenth century parish Churches and all cathedrals as national monuments, before leasing them under proper guarantees. Possibly preferential treatment could be meted out to the disestablished community. Not uninteresting it would be to give to Roman Catholics, Anglicans and Nonconformists, within the fitting limits of decency, the

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opportunity to avail themselves of the privilege of enjoying *successfully* the use of the *same* houses of prayer. As students of the history of the Commonwealth are aware, the idea is not altogether new.

Disestablishment is inevitable. But before and after disestablishment and whether or no an agreed liturgy be framed before disestablishment within the bounds of Anglicanism, Anglo-Catholicism will grow in strength. Why? Its dogmatism, its vitality, its warmth and colour, its music, its lack of respect for persons, its will to social righteousness make it a magnet to pull less certain Anglican groups and individuals into its field. There, in turn, its converts will feel the strong attraction of Romanism, whose greater dogmatism, vitality, æsthetic and pseudo-æsthetic appeal are likely to obscure its shortcomings as a champion of social betterment. Non-Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism, before and after disestablishment, will become more nebulous. Whereas Roman Catholicism and Anglo-Catholicism set up a *revealed* Constantinopolitan religion, ask for *experimental* faith and do not necessarily attempt a *rational* justification of the Constantinopolitan creed and centuries of practice, non-Anglo Catholic Anglicans first of all explain the sense in which they accept

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Constantinople and developed ritual and then essay the task of showing that their position is more or less *rational*. Thus it will continue to be the case that capable priests, aware of the irrationality of historic orthodoxy and alive to the just claims of common sense and philosophy, will spend their lives temporizing, explaining and reconciling this, that and the other data, worried and unsure where their Catholic friends are certain. Then, as now, mention of the "kingdom of heaven" will be heard far more often from the pulpits and in the hymns of the non-orthodox than in the sermons and praise of the orthodox. Then, as now, the concept will imply meliorism on earth and uncertainty beyond it. There is no promise (witness the failure of C.O.P.E.C.) that the preaching of meliorism will do more than titillate the middle-aged into a belief that they are avoiding a well-fed hypocrisy and disgust the young with its inconclusiveness. Experiments in congregational worship will be commoner—an incidental result of which may, perhaps, be a return to reasonable *tempos* in singing! All these developments will occur in the not distant years, most of them within the lives of our children. But education will eventually destroy Anglo-Catholicism as surely as

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it will kill Rome. By that time non-Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism will have gone most of the way to extinguish itself in sheer inconclusiveness.

The outlook for Protestant Nonconformity is not fair. In the years immediate, it will continue its little accommodations in the sacred name of unity, but largely at the dictation of insufficient financial support. The old Independency of Baptists and Congregationalists, merging in union with Presbyterianism, or, at least, copying the Presbyterian plan of 'moderation' may discover, too late, essence and virtue being gone out of it and public worship dragged to a dull mediocrity, that Milton was right when he declared "New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large".¹ Primitive Methodism will presumably die of respectability contracted from the Wesleyanism with which it must henceforth associate. The Society of Friends will indefinitely survive. It is worth while to reflect that, had the Arian heresy succeeded (every historian is aware how easily it might have done so) the history of Europe would have been quite changed by the preaching of God, and the man Jesus and an apocalyptic doom. Organized Unitarianism, the

¹ *On the new forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament.*

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lineal descendant of Arianism, which preaches God and the man but not the doom, finds it so difficult to learn that religion is not a matter of intellection only, but involves feeling in a still greater degree, so hard also, because of that same lack of warmth and colour in its worship, to touch the working classes, that it is not safe to predict for it as an organization the future it otherwise merits. Protestant Nonconformity will, on the whole, like non-Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism, year by year, fail in vigour and for exactly the same reason.

* * * * *

Is there no 'unless' to the concluding words of the prophecy? These later words have been written by the bank of a sedgy river and the call of the harvester comes down the breeze. Over the rise lifts the grey church tower.

Here in the country's heart
Where the grass is green,
Life is the same sweet life
As it e'er hath been.

Trust in a God still lives,
And the bell at morn
Floats with a thought of God
O'er the rising corn.

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

God comes down in the rain
And the crop grows tall,
This is the country faith
And the best of all.¹

The verse idealizes the facts. Still, should one take the bridle-path to the church of one's childhood and, passing by shady limes and flanking yew-trees through God's acre, where father and forebears sleep, enter the low rose-hung porch into the warm stillness, an hundred memories would throng the mind, and a mimicry of happenings that one's eyes did not see, because those things took place in days old as the effigied tombs' recumbent figures, would flit, gay or ghostly, before the multi-paned eastern window. Who, born in an English village, would not, if he could, prophesy good and not evil of what is now the Church of England? Should one climb the neighbouring hills one might catch a glimpse of the tall tower and the octagon of Ely. Saxon, Norman, medieval bishop stablished that house of God. Industry surges about it in less full tide than around the base of another cathedral one might reach in less than an hour of pleasant travel from this spot. That latter stands, castle-companioned, surrounded by its many parish churches.

¹ Norman Gale.

VICISTI, GALILÆE ?

It has known mailed knight and rightly rebellious villein at its gate. Its city's looms were Europe-famed. A crude industrialism, scampering after wealth, rushed northward. The city is preserved, great in new manufactures, set as in a garden and unspoiled. How much does that city, York, Peterborough, Lichfield, Carlisle, Bristol, Gloucester or Lincoln owe to its cathedral, the symbol of a reproving fitness of things, forbidding the hideous unnecessary aggregations of Leeds or Bradford or the chaos of Manchester? Some day a writer will discuss the restraining influence of English cathedrals and older parish churches upon unthinking industrialism. Materially, as well as spiritually, cathedrals have mattered. Who that loves the great houses of prayer would not, if he could, speak comfortably in his prophecy of the future of the faith which has been, for centuries, in one form or another, proclaimed within their walls?

Sentiment to the National Church may be strong; appreciation of the positive achievements of Nonconformity must co-exist with it. Thought strays over half a county. 'Chapels' are everywhere—Congregationalist, Baptist, Wesleyan, but chiefly Primitive Methodist. The early Victorianism of a rebuilt Congregational

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

“Bethel”, the flamboyance of a Wesleyan edifice, the cheapness of the Primitive “Ebenezer” may, and do, offend. But such architectural style is accidental and, in some cases, the defect of poverty. Independency had puritanical limitations; but it nurtured men of the similitude of the Hebrew prophets. Augustus Jessopp spoke, and justly, of the itinerant Primitives of this neighbourhood as the friars of their day. But neither sentiment for the flinty, ivy-covered towers, that lack scaling spires, or respect for the chapels by cross roads and fords shall make one yield to those (and such there are) which “say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits”. That would be unworthy. If there must be an ‘unless’, it is easily spoken.

Unless the non-Anglo Catholic element in the National Church, in the hour of its extremity and greatest inconclusiveness, open its mind to truth, repudiate as childish things the Constantinopolitan and all other creeds, the XXXIX articles, the divinity of Jesus and belief in miracles, proclaim a universal respect for reason, teach men to listen to the voice of nature and toil for corporate righteousness and civic grace, there is no hope for the Church

VICISTI, GALILÆE ?

of England and the glory is departed. Like remarks apply to Protestant Non-conformity.

The universities, the towns should lead. Yet from a cathedral pulpit the author lately heard everything good in the world, presumably from the teaching of Lao-tse to the vaunted honesty of Mr Baldwin then holding the cruel ring in the coal owners' quarrel with Mr Cook and the miners, identified with the Christ of the Church (which Christ, though the preacher did not handle the matter, must still further be somehow connected with the Jesus of Galilee). And, from a Congregational pulpit near at hand to the rising edifice in which the cited utterance was made, he listened, at another time, to a doctor of divinity making the bald statement that, when the soldier dies, the doctor watches through the night, or the Lascar coals a steamship, there is Christ. He either concludes that non-Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism and Congregationalism are losing all sense of the value of logic and language or that these fluffy pronouncements are the precursors of worthy thought struggling to be uttered. Let no reader imagine that the author would be other than glad to find the latter alternative true. He would he could be assured that non-Anglo-

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

Catholic Anglicanism and progressive Nonconformity will at length espouse, because they can no other, what Tennyson has called a "Faith beyond the forms of Faith"¹ and hold the gateway to the philosophy, the religion that is to be. Dare any leader assure him?

¹*The Ancient Sage.*

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